

## **APPENDIX L. RESPONSES TO FEBRUARY 18, 1999, PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS**

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Public Hearing to Comment on the  
Draft Environmental Assessment for  
Recommended Improvements to SR 179 Between  
Milepost 304.5 to the Junction of SR 89A

Big Park Community School Gymnasium  
25 West Saddlehorn Court  
Sedona, Arizona

Thursday, February 18, 1999  
6:00 p.m.

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

ORIGINAL

DEBORAH L. MOREASH, RPR  
Court Reporter

Yoder & McFate Reporting Service, Inc.  
Phoenix, AZ

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PROCEEDINGS

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2  
3 MR. GEORGE WALLACE: I'd like to thank you all  
4 for coming tonight. This is the public hearing for State  
5 Route 179 highway improvements from milepost 304.5 to the Y  
6 at 89A. My name is George Wallace, I'm with the ADOT  
7 roadway study section. We're going to have a brief  
8 presentation by our consultant to explain the alternative  
9 that is preferred at this time and then we will be going  
10 back into our open forum hearing format where you can look  
11 at the displays and ask us questions.

12 We have two court reporters here, one seated  
13 right over here to my left and one gentleman back over here  
14 by the exit sign on the other side. We have a box where you  
15 can put written comments in or you can send other comments,  
16 written comments, prior to March 8th to the address that's  
17 shown on the handout.

18 I'd like to introduce just a couple of our study  
19 team right now from our consultant BRW, George Fies, project  
20 manager standing back there, Mark Small, project engineer  
21 with AZTEC. The engineer is Rob Lemke. He's going to give  
22 the explanations of alternative C. Our district engineer  
23 from Flagstaff, Don Dorman, is back over there in the  
24 corner. We have Jim Rindone from ADOT environmental  
25 planning over here under the basket, basket hanging, and we

1 have Diane Simpson-Colebank from Logan Simpson Design, who  
2 prepared the environmental document right there, and I'll  
3 turn it over to Rob now and he'll be giving a brief  
4 presentation of our preferred alternative.

5 MR. ROB LEMKE: Thanks, George. Can everybody  
6 hear me? All right. What I'm going to do tonight is  
7 briefly walk you through the handout you've picked up on the  
8 way in. As George mentioned, we are going to talk tonight  
9 about the recommended alternative for the one SR 179 project  
10 which is alternative C, so let's go ahead and do it.

11 On page two of your handout, let's just kind of  
12 walk through, on location of the study area we're on SR 179.  
13 The study begins at milepost 304.5 and ends at SR 89A which  
14 is at milepost 313.4. I know it's going to difficult to see  
15 these graphics behind me but what's up here is in your  
16 handout and I'm going to walk you through it. When we're  
17 done we have large scale displays on both sides of the wall  
18 over here, they're colored in yellow. Both sides of the  
19 walls have the exact same thing. It shows the recommended  
20 alternative C. Okay, let's go ahead.

21 Alternative C as most of you probably know is a  
22 result of gathering new accident traffic data and  
23 coordinating with the agencies such as the city of Sedona,  
24 Village of Oak Creek, and the Forest Service, as well as a  
25 lot of ADOT sections and obtaining the public input from

1 yourself. Now, as I walk through this on page two there's  
2 some text. It probably is going to be easier for you to  
3 really see what's going on by looking on page three. Page  
4 three of your handout shows the study limits. On the bottom  
5 of your page you'll see it's 304.5, at the top of the page  
6 you'll see it's SR 89A milepost 313.4. Let's start at the  
7 bottom.

8 This route as we went through, ADOT came to us as  
9 the consultants and said look, we need you to take a look at  
10 this roadway, take a look at the accident traffic data,  
11 project 20 years the traffic volumes based upon the growth  
12 in the area, and come up with typical sections. Typical  
13 sections show what the roadway cross section looks like.  
14 Those sections are shown on pages four through six of your  
15 handout. The typical sections as they're labeled C1, C2,  
16 and if you go through the other pages those sections match  
17 the large scale drawings that are up on the wall.

18 For example, when we start at the beginning of  
19 the project C1 is a four-lane rural roadway with a raised  
20 median, so if you take a look on page four right at the top  
21 there, the top section that's labeled C1, it'll show you  
22 that we have a four-lane roadway with shoulders and a raised  
23 median, which means that it's a curbed section. That goes  
24 from milepost 304.5 to milepost 305.9. From milepost 305.9  
25 to 307.1 we have a four-lane urban roadway that has a raised

1 curbed median also and that's section C2.

2 So if you look on page four you'll see section  
3 C2. This shows a four-lane raised median. It's got urban,  
4 it's an urban roadway. That means that it's curb and gutter  
5 on the outside of the roadway. There also is an area that's  
6 provided, a graded area for future sidewalk that is going to  
7 be built by those other than ADOT, for example the City, the  
8 Village, the County, and so on. In areas where existing  
9 sidewalks exist, when those are removed sidewalk will be  
10 replaced in those areas.

11 Okay. The next section which basically is a  
12 four-lane rural roadway with a raised median is right around  
13 the Bell Rock Road area that goes from milepost 307.1 to  
14 307.2. That's typical section number three, C3, which is  
15 shown on page five at the top. Again, it's a four-lane  
16 roadway that does have a shoulder and in the middle it has a  
17 raised curb median. Those medians will be broken in certain  
18 areas to allow left-hand turning movements to the  
19 developments and businesses and residences that are along  
20 the route.

21 Typical section C4 is the next one. C4 goes from  
22 basically from the forest boundary, which is just north of  
23 the Circle K there, and goes up to about half a mile or so  
24 south of Back O' Beyond roadway. In that area we have a  
25 four-lane rural divided roadway with bifurcated alignments.

1 Basically what that means is there's two roadways that have  
2 independent horizontal and vertical alignments, and if you  
3 look at section C4 in your handout which is on page five, at  
4 the bottom it shows what that would look like.

5 So going through the forest area we'd have two  
6 lanes in each direction with shoulders and a bifurcated  
7 alignment, which basically means it's separated. So if you  
8 were to look you can see on your sheet on page number three  
9 that it shows the roadway is separated here. What will  
10 happen is there'll be a northbound direction and a  
11 southbound direction because the roadway will be divided in  
12 that area. The large scale drawings that are up here will  
13 depict that because the roadway is colored in yellow.

14 Moving along from just south of Back O' Beyond to  
15 up near Back O' Beyond we're going to go back to a four-lane  
16 rural roadway with a raised median that will go back to  
17 section C1, which shows a four-lane section that is rural  
18 shoulders with the curb median from Back O' Beyond up to  
19 Highland Road we have a four-lane urban curved roadway,  
20 which is section C5. Again, curved roadway means that  
21 there's curb and gutter on the outside, there's a raised  
22 median in the middle, and we also have a graded area for  
23 future sidewalk.

24 Lastly, from Highland to SR 89A this is a  
25 five-lane urban roadway, that's section C6 in your handout,

1 and in this area there would not be a raised median. There  
2 would be sidewalk that would be replaced because sidewalk  
3 exists there right now. So if you look on page six where it  
4 says C6, that's the last section.

5 Okay. That's basically the typical section.

6 Let's go ahead and go to what the construction cost is on  
7 this. If you go back to page two, estimated construction  
8 cost for this is 29,982,000. That's to build the entire  
9 roadway from 304.5 to 313.4. There will be new right of way  
10 that will be acquired, approximately 109 acres from the  
11 National Forest Land and 12 acres of private land. Okay.

12 As a part of this project we are going to build  
13 nine scenic pullouts. Excuse me, we're going to build five  
14 scenic pullouts. We've evaluated and looked at nine of them  
15 that may be constructed in the future but with this project  
16 we're going to have five of them built. Let's go to your  
17 handout on page number seven. Since this is a scenic  
18 highway and you all know that people pull off the roadway  
19 pretty much anywhere they want to take pictures of the  
20 spectacular scenes, what we've done is we've taken a look at  
21 and found those areas where people frequently pull off and  
22 have decided that those are areas where pullouts are going  
23 to need to be constructed.

24 If you look on page seven and the key, you'll see  
25 that there's a rectangle that's filled in that shows where

1 the proposed scenic pullouts are. You'll see a square that  
2 is not filled in. That is an area where it's a potential  
3 future pullout and there's also some trailheads that are  
4 shown on there.

5 If you can see on your sheet on page seven as you  
6 go through there are four scenic pullouts that are proposed  
7 on the northbound direction and those are shown in your  
8 handout and they're also graphically shown on here as far as  
9 where they are in relationship to mileposts. Those are also  
10 shown on the large scale drawings up here and are colored in  
11 yellow. As I said, we looked at nine. Five of them are  
12 going to be constructed with this job. The other four are  
13 potential future scenic pullouts. They're shown on the  
14 large scale drawings also but they're not colored in because  
15 those are going to be constructed or I should say may be  
16 constructed sometime in the future. Okay.  
17 Lastly, what I want to say before I turn it over  
18 to Diane is if you go on page eight at the top of the page,  
19 SR 179 projects currently programmed. The five-year program  
20 currently lists that there's going to be three projects that  
21 are going to be constructed, but after the public hearing  
22 and based upon your input of the project it's going to be  
23 revised so that the project would be built in two phases.  
24 So from the beginning of the project which is 304.5 to  
25 310.1, which is Back O' Beyond, that would be one project,

1 and then from Back O' Beyond to SR 89A, that will be the  
2 second project.

3 That doesn't necessarily mean the first one's  
4 going first or the second one is going first, but this is  
5 two of the two projects that are going to be constructed as  
6 a part of this and based upon your input that will factor  
7 into which section is going to be built first. At this time  
8 what I'd like to do is ask Diane to come up and talk to you  
9 about the draft mitigation measures that are in your handout  
10 and so here's Diane.

11 MS. DIANE SIMPSON-COLEBANK: Thank you. Good  
12 evening. It's really great that everybody has shown up  
13 tonight, we really appreciate you taking the time out of  
14 your day to come and give us your input. My name again is  
15 Diane Simpson-Colebank. I was the environmental planner on  
16 the project and have been with it since we began about four  
17 and a half years ago.

18 As Rob said, if you look in the very back of your  
19 handout, there are several sheets that are entitled draft  
20 mitigation measures. On the table over here I've set up  
21 about four of these draft EAs. They were also put in the  
22 public library in Sedona, so if you haven't had a chance,  
23 they're there for you to look at as well. These draft  
24 mitigations that are in your handout are straight from this  
25 document and identify the measures that we believe are

11

1 necessary to reduce the impacts of the potential  
2 improvements that are going to be implemented with the  
3 construction of alternative C, and what I want to point out,  
4 I'm not going to go through each and every one with you.  
5 You'll notice there are a couple changes, one,  
6 there are breakouts as to what ADOT's responsibilities are,  
7 what the Forest Service responsibilities are, and the  
8 contractor's responsibilities, and in some cases they're the  
9 same in each of these three areas, but I want to focus on  
10 what I feel are the real critical ones that you need to be  
11 aware of and might not be if you haven't had the time to  
12 read the document.

13 The first is that most of the mitigation measures  
14 center around or focus on mitigation to the impacts to the  
15 visual or scenic qualities of the roadway. We've already  
16 mentioned as Rob said that we know this is a very sensitive  
17 area. We worked very hard to, one, maintain the scenic road  
18 designation as well as meet the objectives from the scenic  
19 management plans from the Forest Service, so one of the  
20 things that we wanted to do as we outlined in these  
21 mitigation measures is to make sure that we can get as small  
22 a footprint on the land as possible.  
23 We're looking at very, in some cases very steep,  
24 relatively steep fill slopes with guardrails so that we have  
25 very little impact to the vegetation that's out there now.

12

1    We're looking at doing things, identifying areas that we can  
2    put planting pockets in. We're going to make sure that any  
3    of the cut slopes and rocks have an irregular form to it so  
4    that they tend to blend in with the natural land forms that  
5    are out there. These are very special concerns to all of  
6    us.

7    The other thing we're going to make sure is that  
8    any of the structures that are there such as the retaining  
9    walls that are shown, any of the sound walls that are  
10   actually implemented, the new bridge structures, are going  
11   to blend with the natural surroundings and that's in both  
12   the texture of the structure as well as the color of the  
13   structure. So you can see that we're really trying to make  
14   sure that we mitigate as much as we can any of the visual  
15   impacts along this corridor.

16   The other thing I want to mention are the two  
17   really focus mitigation measures on wildlife. We've worked  
18   very closely with the biologists with the Forest Service  
19   here and also with the Arizona Game and Fish Department and  
20   have identified an area that is near milepost 308 that we're  
21   going to put some what we call wildlife drinkers or the  
22   saucers so that the deer population don't have to cross the  
23   road to get to water sources. So that is part of our  
24   mitigation.

25   We're also very concerned about any potential

1 impacts to some of the nesting areas along the road and  
2 these aren't really even very close to the road. We're  
3 actually going out quite a bit of ways from them in terms of  
4 limiting any blasting that might be needed in some of these  
5 rock formations. So we're very concerned about any impacts  
6 to wildlife and have addressed those specifically in those  
7 two mitigation measures.

8 The third area that I just want to touch on  
9 briefly is Oak Creek and I'm sure you're all aware that that  
10 is a unique water of Arizona and that we are going to pay  
11 particular attention to making sure that the water quality  
12 of Oak Creek is not at all in jeopardy and have identified  
13 specific measures to make sure that there are very little  
14 impacts to no impacts to the waters of Oak Creek in the  
15 construction of the new bridge.

16 That pretty much I think hits the highlights of  
17 the mitigation measures. I'll be more than happy to talk to  
18 anyone who wants to know specific information on that and as  
19 well they're in these documents and in your handouts. At  
20 this I'll turn it over to George.

21 MR. GEORGE WALLACE: Thank you, Diane. I forgot  
22 to introduce a few other people here that you might want to  
23 be interested in talking to. Dave Melgren from ADOT is our  
24 design project manager when this project goes to the final  
25 design, hopefully sometime next year, he's standing right

1 back here. we have Ken Anderson from the Coconino National  
2 Forest over there in the red sweater, and Mike Serio, the  
3 gentleman over there with a hat on, right of way agent for  
4 this particular project.

5 Like I said, we have comment forms on the back of  
6 the handouts. We'd like you to fill them out either tonight  
7 or prior to March 8 and mail them to the address on there.  
8 We have two court reporters here to take your comments and  
9 I'd like to point out the visual graphics towards the stage  
10 behind me. These are photo simulations. There's I believe  
11 10 of them. They show current and proposed conditions from  
12 various viewpoints along the corridor. Some are from the  
13 roadway looking up into the forest areas and some are from  
14 residential areas or other points of interest looking down  
15 on the proposed highway.

16 It's very important that you take a look at those  
17 to see exactly what the impact is going to be to this area.  
18 And once more, I'd like to thank you all for coming and  
19 we're going to go back into our open format and please come  
20 back up to the displays and ask any of the people that have  
21 name tags on any questions and thanks again for coming.

22 L1 MR. RICK MORRIS: This statement is in response  
23 to the State's planned improvements to State Route 179 for  
24 milepost 304.5 to State Route 89A and is submitted on behalf  
25 of the 11 members of the Morris family, owners of the Inn at

1 Oak Creek. We are unanimously opposed to the widening of  
 2 State Route 179 beyond two lanes and a third turn lane from  
 3 a broad perspective.

4 It is our belief that construction of a five-lane  
 5 highway will destroy forever the aesthetic quality of the  
 6 community. Extending five lanes of traffic to the  
 7 intersection of State Route 89A will create an intersection  
 8 more or less the visual equivalent of State Route 89A and  
 9 State Route 260 in Cottonwood, an unfortunate eyesore that  
 10 no community proud of its beauty should have to bear.

11 Furthermore, the business corridor from the  
 12 Hillside shops to State Route 89A, long regarded by most  
 13 visitors as the best location for quality art galleries,  
 14 boutiques, and Indian crafts, will be radically altered. We  
 15 do not believe that including sidewalks will make it more  
 16 pedestrian friendly. Five lanes of asphalt separating  
 17 sidewalks are simply too imposing and hazardous to  
 18 pedestrian traffic. We believe that a roadway of the  
 19 proportions proposed is totally incompatible with the small  
 20 town quality that Sedona still maintains.

21 We are led to believe that the road is needed  
 22 because of projected demand. More lanes can obviously carry  
 23 more traffic but if demand is what drives the decision, why  
 24 is the Forest Service justified in restricting the vehicular  
 25 access to our public forests or boating use of the Grand

**Response to Comment L1-1**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impact, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

**Response to Comment L1-2**

Pedestrian paths will be constructed within the project area at the following locations:

- In the Village of Oak Creek on both sides of SR 179 between Ridge Trail Drive (MP 305.9) and the National Forest Boundary at the north end of the Village.
- Linked with the existing Bell Rock Pathway, a pedestrian path on the east side of SR 179 that will thus connect the Village of Oak Creek to SR 89A at SR 179 MP 313.4.
- In the city of Sedona on both sides of SR 179 between Arrow Drive (MP 312.0) and the "Y" (SR 89A). Other than a sidewalk from the bridge to the "Y" and the Bell Rock Pathway, these sidewalks do not currently exist and will be an improvement to the pedestrian environment. Crosswalks at the intersections will aid people in crossing the 5-lane roadway.

16

1 Canyon's Colorado River, both sound policies generally  
 2 endorsed by the public. A great demand exists that is  
 3 unsatisfied. Certainly there is far greater demands on  
 4 California's and Oregon's coastal highways than two lanes of  
 5 paving can carry, yet both states and its citizens have the  
 6 wisdom to deny widening of the road.

7 But more specifically, we oppose the widening  
 8 because it will unquestionably destroy our family's  
 9 business. Our family's inn is a nationally acclaimed bed  
 10 and breakfast that caters to sophisticated and  
 11 discriminating travelers. There is simply no way to  
 12 mitigate the negative impact of a five-lane highway  
 13 constructed virtually at our front door as it stands. We  
 14 are an asset to the community. If the State succeeds as  
 15 planned, we'll be nothing more than a memory.

L2 MS. ANNE ENGELHARDT: We have Plaza del Angel on  
 Highway 179 and Cortez and our concern is if we can perhaps  
 get a crosswalk in there as well as the traffic light  
 because of the post office as well as the fire station are  
 on that same street and the safety of buses loading and  
 unloading, we wanted to know if there would be a designated  
 bus lane, you know how people walk across the street.

L3 MR. DON ENGELHARDT: Especially one of our major  
 concerns is that our Plaza del Angel is almost right  
 straight across from the prime outlets, okay, and we feel

**Response to Comment L1-3**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the FEA describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty; Flags, Kites & Fun; the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.

**Response to Comment L2-1**

Cross-walks will be included, according to ADOT's standard specifications for construction, and traffic lights will be further evaluated during final design.

The need to install traffic signals will be further evaluated during final design. The intersections at Chapel Road and SR 179 and at Schmehly Hill Road and SR 179 are the only new intersections that warrant signalization. As other intersections meet the warrant criteria, signals will be considered.

**Response to Comment L2-2**

The proposed improvements to SR 179 do not include separate designated bus lanes. The proposed 4-lane and 5-lane roadway will facilitate the use of buses by providing free-flowing service adjacent to the curb. Buses will not have to yield to traffic as they would if only shoulders were constructed. The wide outside lane (16 feet) provides space for bicyclists. In addition, the proposed plan will provide a 5-foot sidewalk or graded area behind the curb to allow bus riders a safe buffer from roadway traffic.

1 that what's going to happen is that people who shop in the  
 2 prime outlets are going to walk across the street from our  
 3 plaza, people who are going to be at our plaza are going to  
 4 walk across the street to the prime outlets and we feel  
 5 that's going to be a huge pedestrian traffic area and so our  
 6 concern is that we're going to have to have crosswalks for  
 7 those people to get to and from and without that they're  
 8 going walk on the road where it's unsafe.

9 MS. ANNE ENGELHARDT: And wasn't there another?

10 MR. DON ENGELHARDT: Also there is a telephone  
 11 pole line in front of our plaza and we kind of wonder if  
 12 they're going to be burying those phone lines under the  
 13 ground so they won't be exposed.

14 MS. ANNE ENGELHARDT: That's it.

15 L4 MR. RICHMAN: Well, the problem that I see, we  
 16 have 151 parking places in Hillside and we met with ADOT and  
 17 I guess it was two years ago and they told us at this time  
 18 we are not using any parking places when we did our add-on  
 19 to have it in the cantina and the other retail stores and  
 20 now all of a sudden they come out with this new figure and  
 21 we're losing 41 parking places. Now, they show on this  
 22 paper we have 200 but we don't, we have 150 I believe  
 23 parking places. If we lose 41 places we're out of business,  
 24 so we need 70 places just for employees and the tenants that  
 25 are in that store so we just want to know what's going to be

L3-1  
 L3-2  
 L4-1

**Response to Comment L3-1**

Pedestrian paths will be constructed within the project area at the following locations.

- In the Village of Oak Creek on both sides of SR 179 between Ridge Trail Drive (MP 305.9) and the National Forest Boundary at the north end of the Village.
- Linked with the existing Bell Rock Pathway, a pedestrian path on the east side of SR 179 that will thus connect the Village of Oak Creek to SR 89A at SR 179 MP 313.4.
- In the city of Sedona on both sides of SR 179 between Arrow Drive (MP 312.0) and the "Y" (SR 89A).

Other than a sidewalk from the bridge to the "Y" and the Bell Rock Pathway, these sidewalks do not currently exist and will be an improvement to the pedestrian environment. Crosswalks at the intersections will aid people in crossing the 5-lane roadway. Cross-walks will be included, according to ADOT's standard specifications for construction, and traffic lights will be further evaluated during final design.

The need to install traffic signals will be further evaluated during final design. The intersections at Chapel Road and SR 179 and at Schnebly Hill Road and SR 179 are the only new intersections that warrant signalization. As other intersections meet the warrant criteria, signals will be considered.

**Response to Comment L3-2**

ADOT cannot participate financially in the "undergrounding" of overhead utilities. However, if other parties should agree to fund this, ADOT would coordinate the utility design with the highway design and would incorporate the design into the construction project.

**Response to Comment L4-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

Yoder & McFate Reporting Service, Inc.  
 Phoenix, AZ

**Response to Comment L4-1 (Continued)**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

**Response to Comment L5-1**

Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

**Response to Comment L5-2**

SR 179 is the primary access route from the Phoenix metropolitan area to Sedona and to the recreation areas associated with Oak Creek Canyon and the red rock formations. SR 179 currently serves as the primary access to the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest and is considered an entry corridor to the National Forest lands. The State of Arizona Parkways, Historic, and Scenic Roads Advisory Committee designate much of SR 179 within the project limits as the Red Rock Scenic Road. The project is in a uniquely scenic area of the state and attracts local, national, and international visitors. The route traverses through the Red Rock country and provides spectacular panoramic views of eroded monuments, promontories, cliffs, and buttes.

According to the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices, interstate traffic interchange signs can depict two destination names. One sign that may list one or two destinations is also allowed. The sign at the SR 260/I-17 traffic interchange identifies Cottonwood and Payson with three destinations on the supplemental sign (Jerome, Clarkdale, and Tuzigoot National Monument). Requests to add Camp Verde, Camp Verde State Park, and Dead Horse Ranch State Park to the signs have been denied. In addition, mileage to Sedona via SR 260 and SR 89A is

18

1      the outcome of this, you know.	12     MR. NICK FARLEY: I call this the dead-end
2 <b>L5</b> MS. JEAN PALMER: Number one, I don't want four	13     freeway. I live on one segment of 179, one not right by the
3      more lanes coming into Sedona and if they want, they might	14     highway, we have to go to church which is right on the
4      think about leaving it the way it is and maybe having a	15     highway but I just really cannot see the sense of doing
5      passing lane. Another thing they might do is in Camp Verde	16     something like this for a number of reasons and I understand
6      put a sign Sedona through Cottonwood or whatever, what is	17     the problems down towards Sedona. I'm in the city of
7      it, 169, I don't know what the route number is, but that'll	18     Sedona, live in the city, it's a mess because you're
8      be four lanes all the way and we don't need another four	19     chopping away the road down on Hillside down on the other
9      lanes into Sedona. I'm concerned because I have emphysema,	20     side to the bed and breakfast there, but apart from anything
10     it'll put the road within probably a couple hundred feet of	21     else there's expansion here, the demographics are huge.
11     my house and I don't need the pollution.	22     By 2018 we're going to be doubling the population
12 <b>L6</b> MR. NICK FARLEY: I call this the dead-end	23     or something. Is everybody taking account of the resources
13     freeway. I live on one segment of 179, one not right by the	24     to support that, like water? I don't believe so. We're now
14     highway, we have to go to church which is right on the	25     working to try to get a scientific hydrological survey not
15     highway but I just really cannot see the sense of doing	
16     something like this for a number of reasons and I understand	
17     the problems down towards Sedona. I'm in the city of	
18     Sedona, live in the city, it's a mess because you're	
19     chopping away the road down on Hillside down on the other	
20     side to the bed and breakfast there, but apart from anything	
21     else there's expansion here, the demographics are huge.	
22     By 2018 we're going to be doubling the population	
23     or something. Is everybody taking account of the resources	
24     to support that, like water? I don't believe so. We're now	
25     working to try to get a scientific hydrological survey not	

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**Response to Comment L5-2 (Continued)**

greater than that of the route from I-17 to Sedona via SR 179. ADOT is required to sign the quickest, most direct route, and in this case, SR 179 would be the most direct route.

**Response to Comment L5-3**

The main causes of carbon monoxide are vehicle speed changes and vehicle idling. Completion of this project will greatly increase traffic handling capabilities and reduce idling and speed changes. Some deterioration of air quality can be expected during construction, due to the operation of construction equipment combined with the slower traffic speeds that are associated with a construction zone. However, this will be a localized condition that will be discontinued when the project is completed. Dust generated from construction activities will be controlled and minimized. The directives of the *Arizona Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction* (2000 Edition) to observe and comply with all air pollution ordinances, regulations, orders, etc., from those agencies having jurisdiction will be followed. Refer to Section IV. F. Air Quality of the Final Environmental Assessment for more information on the air analysis.

1 just of Sedona but of the whole Arizona and the southwest  
 2 because water is such a critical resource, and I suspect if  
 3 that is done this will tell us that hey, we can't have this  
 4 huge number of people that will bring into Sedona. There  
 L6-1 5 are other alternatives like making widening the side of the  
 6 highway there with more turnoffs, more lanes or something,  
 7 but not having a five-lane highway. This to me is  
 8 absolutely absurd and a waste of money. Some of it's my  
 9 money. Thank you.

10 L7 MS. PEGGY LANNING-EISLER: I'm Peggy  
 11 Lanning-Eisler and I have two businesses in Hozho that I  
 12 have given the last 18 years to. My businesses are in C6.  
 13 They're art galleries. As far as I can tell by your maps it  
 14 looks like your highway is going to be a matter of two to  
 15 six feet from my front window. I cannot imagine what the  
 16 intrusion of the noise would be in art galleries. Art is  
 17 something that has to be viewed in quiet with silent music.  
 18 You do not put art galleries on a main highway. I cannot  
 19 believe that someone hasn't seen that they're within feet of  
 20 my front windows. I cannot believe that you're taking our  
 21 right to earn a living from people who have built Hozho and  
 22 helped build Sedona for the art community that we are.

23 I am very sorry that this has even been proposed.  
 24 I feel like over 400 businesses are going to be affected by  
 25 this. I think there could be another thought about how to

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**Response to Comment L6-1**

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was evaluated. ADOT has established level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal level of service for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location. ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

ADOT's interest in addressing the traffic congestion on SR 179 goes beyond the issue of delay to the highway users. The following guidelines and factors were considered in the analysis:

- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
- Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.

**Response to Comment L6-1 (Continued)**

- Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane and 5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4- or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

Scenic pull-outs would certainly aid tourists stopping along the roadway to view the rocks. However, scenic pull-outs will not alleviate congestion problems or reduce accidents caused by the current, inadequate sight distance on the highway.

The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was modeled. ADOT has established a level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location.

**Response to Comment L6-1 (Continued)**

ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

1 get traffic through. We need to look more at turnouts and  
 2 alternate routes to get the people from the Village of Oak  
 3 Creek to West Sedona and get the ambulances from West Sedona  
 4 and fire trucks to Oak Creek Village, but it doesn't need to  
 5 be a four-lane highway just a matter of two feet from  
 6 windows of galleries that are trying to make a living in  
 7 this town. If you come that close you need to buy the  
 8 building and buy the lease. You cannot operate an art  
 9 gallery two feet from a highway.

10 **L8** MR. BURT TURNER: First comment would be I think  
 11 that we ought to make sure that there is an alternate route  
 12 between the Village of Oak Creek and West Sedona before they  
 13 start the construction, they're going to have a real traffic  
 14 problem. The second thing has to do with site of oncoming  
 15 traffic when making a left-hand turn onto 179. Right now we  
 16 have two and a half seconds before we get hit when we first  
 17 see the car and it takes two and a half seconds before it  
 18 gets to us, this is off of San Miguel. And that's basically  
 19 all I have to say right now. Thank you.

20 **L9** MR. DAN GARLAND: I just want to say that my name  
 21 is Dan Garland. I'm the owner of the Garland building,  
 22 which is located on Highway 179 and I feel that the highway  
 23 should be improved but in the national forest areas it would  
 24 be very good to go ahead and make it four lanes and it would  
 25 increase the capacity of flow of traffic but I feel that

**Response to Comment L7-1**

In the SR 179 Corridor Study, completed in December 1992, various solutions to the existing and forecasted traffic problems on SR 179 were suggested by ADOT, the public, and affected agencies. Ten corridors, including the existing corridor, were identified. The corridors were evaluated on the basis of several criteria including traffic utilization, scenic sensitivity, compatibility with local land use and development plans, and the number of businesses and homes affected. The existing corridor was selected on the basis of environmental considerations, implementation costs, human and service impacts, and input from the public and affected agencies. Refer to Section II, Alternatives Considered of the Final Environmental Assessment for a discussion of alternatives considered.

Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

**Response to Comment L8-1**

There will be some unavoidable traffic delays caused by project implementation. However, ADOT will make all reasonable efforts to maintain vehicular access to properties that rely on SR 179. Traffic will be managed by detailed traffic control plans and by procedures and guidelines specified in the Arizona Department of Transportation Traffic Control Manual for Highway Construction and Maintenance.

Closure of SR 179 will not be allowed for other than very short periods. Final construction sequencing/phasing, which will be determined during design, will stipulate that significant construction activities that would disrupt traffic will be performed during off-peak hours.

Access to adjacent properties will be maintained during construction.

**Response to Comment L8-1 (Continued)**

During construction, ingress and egress to and from driveways and side roads will be maintained at all times. There will be some related economic impacts to the existing retail businesses within the project limits during construction. The economic impacts are not considered substantial for several reasons: 1) the roadway will not be closed to motorists except for the very brief time required to protect the traveling public, such as during the movement of heavy equipment; 2) access to all business and residential properties will be maintained; 3) access into the Sedona/Oak Creek area will continue on SR 89A from Cottonwood and through Oak Creek Canyon; and 4) standard public information regarding the construction schedule will be provided. Surprises will be minimized by clear and appropriate signage. During driveway reconstruction, one side of the driveway will be constructed at a time in order to maintain access.

During the design phase, ADOT would evaluate working during the evening hours, the timing of the construction (avoiding peak tourism season), and restricting construction to the weekdays. The trade-off is that, relatively speaking, the more restrictions placed on the contractor, the longer the construction would last. ADOT will work with the City of Sedona and the media to encourage motorists to avoid travel on SR 179 during high-volume periods.

**Response to Comment L8-2**

The proposed roadway will use the same posted speed limits that currently exist. The roadway will be modified to improve the horizontal and vertical sight distance, which will benefit both motorists and pedestrians in terms of safety.

While it is true that crossing a 2-lane road takes less time than crossing a 4-lane or 5-lane road, if the existing crossroad does not have adequate sight-distance, accidents will occur whether the road is 2 lanes or 4 lanes wide. The most current 5-year accident data on SR 179 within the project limits indicate that 191 out of 461 accidents (41 percent) occurred at intersections or driveways. The proposed new horizontal and vertical geometry will make the roadway safer by increasing the sight distance, not only on SR 179, but also on the crossroads and driveways. ADOT believes that this will assist in the reduction of accidents and improvement of safety for motorists and pedestrians.

1 once we enter the town city limits or Back O' Beyond as they  
 2 call it that I feel that we're too constricted in those  
 3 areas to have a similar highway and that we need to reduce  
 4 it to two lanes, one going in each direction, and a  
 5 continuous center lane which would allow left turns as well  
 6 as the ability for emergency vehicles to get through in case  
 7 of an accident, and I think as far as the tourists more  
 8 turnouts is a good idea so that they can get off the highway  
 9 but that we can't take away the land from different  
 10 businesses and residences and that the town does not want a  
 11 freeway going through it as such.

12 Other ways of reducing this capacity could be to  
 13 have an alternate route and also to encourage traffic to  
 14 enter Sedona via Cottonwood and the improved road that is  
 15 coming from Cottonwood to Sedona. We also have a gallery  
 16 district that we're trying to form in the area of 179 and we  
 17 are trying to connect all of the different galleries up with  
 18 a pedestrian friendly walkway and it would make it much more  
 19 difficult for pedestrians to get around the area if the road  
 20 was this wide and would just increase or just encourage cars  
 21 to go faster in those areas. I'm very much against four  
 22 lanes in the town of Sedona section of 179.

23 L10 MR. PAUL LECHNER: My first concern will be what  
 24 happened to the proposal that the residents of Sedona and  
 25 Village of Oak Creek area residents voted on and requested,

#### **Response to Comment L9-1**

Left-turn movements will be accommodated at San Miguel Drive.  
 Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

Center left-turn lanes are included in the Selected Alternative in developed sections of the Village of Oak Creek and the city of Sedona.

Scenic pull-outs would certainly aid tourists stopping along the roadway to view the rocks. However, scenic pull-outs will not alleviate congestion problems or reduce accidents caused by the current inadequate sight distance on the highway.

#### **Response to Comment L9-2**

SR 179 is the primary access route from the Phoenix metropolitan area to Sedona and to the recreation areas associated with Oak Creek Canyon and the red rock formations. SR 179 currently serves as the primary access to the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest and is considered an entry corridor to the National Forest lands. The State of Arizona Parkways, Historic, and Scenic Roads Advisory Committee designate much of SR 179 within the project limits as the Red Rock Scenic Road. The project is in a uniquely scenic area of the state and attracts local, national, and international visitors. The route traverses through the Red Rock country and provides spectacular panoramic views of eroded monuments, promontories, cliffs, and buttes.

According to the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices, interstate traffic interchange signs can depict two destination names. One supplemental sign that may list one or two destinations is also allowed. The sign at the SR 260/I-17 traffic interchange identifies Cottonwood and Payson with three destinations on the supplemental sign (Jerome, Clarkdale, and Tuzigoot National Monument). Requests to add Camp Verde,

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**Response to Comment L9-2 (Continued)**

Camp Verde State Park, and Dead Horse Ranch State Park to the signs have been denied. In addition, mileage to Sedona via SR 260 and SR 89A is greater than the route from I-17 to Sedona via SR 179. ADOT is required to sign the quickest, most direct route, and in this case, SR 179 would be the most direct route.

**Response to Comment L9-3**

Pedestrian paths will be constructed within the project area at the following locations:

- In the Village of Oak Creek on both sides of SR 179 between Ridge Trail Drive (MP 305.9) and the National Forest Boundary at the north end of the Village.
- Linked with the existing Bell Rock Pathway, a pedestrian path on the east side of SR 179 that will thus connect the Village of Oak Creek to SR 89A at SR 179 MP 313.4.
- In the city of Sedona on both sides of SR 179 between Arrow Drive (MP 312.0) and the "Y" (SR 89A).

Other than a sidewalk from the bridge to the "Y" and the Bell Rock Pathway, these sidewalks do not currently exist and will be an improvement to the pedestrian environment. Crosswalks at the intersections will aid people in crossing the 5-lane roadway.

**Response to Comment L10-1**

To ADOT's knowledge, there has not been a proposal that the residents of the City of Sedona or Village of Oak Creek have voted on and requested.

22

1 it certainly was not this program. Number two, I'd like to  
 2 know why you are starting this project at the beginning  
 3 point of 304.5. Apparently you feel that you can put all  
 4 this four and five-lane traffic at this point going south  
 L10-2 5 and forcing it into a two-lane road, you make no notations,  
 6 no connotation of any sort and taking care of the roadway  
 7 south of that point.

8 And why are you starting the four-lane road two  
 9 miles south of any major building development? You're  
 10 widening and you're just growing the areas I feel prior to  
 11 any building development that's there. Again, you are  
 12 forcing the traffic down into two lanes right at that point.

13 My other, another concern of mine is your  
 14 so-called noise barrier walls. To this date I have yet to  
 15 see any noise barrier wall other than a 15-foot cement wall  
 16 be any major effective wall to change the noise pollution  
 17 shall we say. Another major concern of mine is after seeing  
 18 many, many projects over the years being developed is dust  
 L10-3 19 and noise control. I have watched many projects in the  
 20 Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek which certainly do not  
 21 come to EPA standards. I am doing everything in my power to  
 22 make sure that the EPA governs and watches this project with  
 23 the utmost discretion as possible.

24 I'm not a fanatic but I see so much waste and so  
 L10-4 25 much uncaring for the neighbors and for the surrounding

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<p>1 areas, mainly dust, dirt, and debris. There will be      2 photographs taken of many of these projects by personal      L10-4 3 residents and I would like to know who will be around to      4 enforce that from the local areas in that area other than      5 the governmental agencies that I'm trying to get in touch      6 with. Thank you.</p> <p>7 L11 MR. PAUL LUNA: I don't know if you are going to      8 build it past Bell Rock but leave the Village alone, the      9 reason is strictly for the tourists, it's not for me, I'm a      10 resident, I don't want to ruin what we already have, I don't      11 want the people, smog, smoke, all the other stuff, the buses      12 and everything else, it would ruin my town. My best idea      13 would be to if you're going to build it, build it anywhere      14 past the Village and ruin Sedona, don't ruin the village,      15 and also too I want to know how come this wasn't answer and      16 question, supposed to be an answer and question when I read      17 the newspaper and there is no answer and question other than      18 this book here. That's all I got to say.</p> <p>19 L12 MS. SHIRLEY CARTS: I'm really upset that there      20 are going to be so many businesses that are literally put      L11-1 21 out of business with this road, particularly just before you      22 cross the bridge in Oak Creek. It's my understanding that      23 the road would be three feet from the bed and breakfast and      24 that the road would be three feet from Hozho and it's my      25 understanding that they are to take 44 or 45 parking spaces</p>	<p>The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was evaluated. ADOT has established level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal level of service for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location. ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.</p> <p>ADOT's interest in addressing the traffic congestion on SR 179 goes beyond the issue of delay to the highway users. The</p>
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**Response to Comment L11-1 (Continued)**

- following guidelines and factors were considered in the analysis:
- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
  - Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.
  - Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane/5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

**Response to Comment L12-1**

There will be unavoidable traffic delays during construction. However, ADOT will make all reasonable efforts to maintain traffic access to properties that rely on SR 179 for their access. During construction, access to driveways and side roads will be maintained at all times. There will be some related economic impacts to the existing retail businesses within the project limits during construction. The economic impacts are not considered substantial for several reasons: 1) the roadway will not be closed to motorists except for the very brief time required to protect the traveling public, such as for the movement of heavy equipment; 2) access to all business and residential properties will be maintained; 3) access into the Sedona/Oak Creek area will continue on SR 89A from Cottonwood and through Oak Creek Canyon; and 4) standard public information on the construction

**Response to Comment L12-1 (Continued)**

schedule will provide clear and proper signage to avoid surprises to motorists. During driveway reconstruction, one side of the driveway will be constructed at a time in order to maintain business access.

During the design phase, ADOT will evaluate working during the evening hours, the timing of the construction (avoiding peak tourism season), and restricting construction to the weekdays. The trade-off is that, relatively speaking, the more restrictions placed on the contractor, the longer the construction would last. ADOT will work with the City of Sedona and the media to encourage travelers to avoid travel on SR 179 during high-volume periods.

**Response to Comment L12-2**

The ADOT right-of-way (ROW) in Sedona will include a pedestrian path along both sides of the roadway between Arrow Drive and the "Y" (SR 89A). The building in question will be beyond this walk outside of the ADOT ROW. Specific ROW dimensions will be determined during final design.

The proposed roadway section and alignment have been designed to minimize impacts to property, residences, and businesses. Approximately 10.6 acres of private land, a total of 12 parking spaces from eight businesses (west side of SR 179 near MP 313.3 at the "Y"), and four commercial building structures (including the canopy structure at the Chevron Service Station) will be affected by the proposed improvements. These are out of the approximately 36 single-standing businesses and four multiple business centers. Refer to Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations in the Final Environmental Assessment for additional information on the economic impacts.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize ROW impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

Response to Comment L13-1

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

6 will go right on by and look at this 16-foot wall, never be  
7 able to figure out how to get up there. I just think it's a  
8 real crime and I think it's unAmerican I mean to just come  
9 in and put people out of business.

10 I know the people that own the bed and breakfast  
11 and their suggestion is because their business is ruined if  
12 the highway is three feet from their front door, their  
13 suggestion was why not consider taking out all of the bed  
14 and breakfast and moving the highway closer to the creek and  
15 instead of wiping everyone out, at least some people would  
16 be able to salvage their businesses.

17 It just plain isn't right and Hillside never  
18 could have opened with 45 less parking spaces. The City  
19 never would have permitted it and it would be absolutely  
20 ridiculous to try to operate that with less parking spaces.  
21 So I feel very strongly about it and I just -- well, it's  
22 just plain a darn shame so I hope somebody listens to this.

23 L13 MR. ROBERT HARMON: I'd like to make a statement

24 I am a resident of the Village of Oak Creek and I own a  
25 business up in Hillside shopping center. I don't see any

L13-1

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Phoenix, AZ

PHOENIX, AR

**Response to Comment L13-1 (Continued)**

ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

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- Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.
- Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane/5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

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**Response to Comment L13-2**

The SR 179 Corridor Study, which was conducted in 1991-92, was the beginning point for public involvement for this project. In the course of that study, 10 alternative corridor improvements were evaluated, including one alternative which was suggested by interested citizens. There were three public meetings during the SR 179 Corridor Study. The prevailing opinion of the citizens and the government agencies involved was that the community would be best served by improvements to the existing highway corridor, in contrast to developing a "by-pass" alternative.

L13-2      1 reason for this particular plan. There are other  
 2 alternatives that should be looked at. I'd like to know who  
 3 is responsible for considering these plans to devastate my  
 4 business as well as many others from roadway from the  
 5 Village of Oak Creek to the Y, expansion of 33 million  
 6 dollars doesn't mean it's for me if there are other  
 7 alternatives for this, I don't see why there aren't,  
 8 basically I want to see who's behind this, how does it help  
 9 Sedona keep its charm, keep its way and find other accesses  
 10 to more achieve some of these problems I'm concerned about.  
 11      L14      MS. DOROTHY A. YOUNG: I am totally opposed to a  
 12 four or five-lane highway. They're going to destroy all the  
 13 charm that I moved here 17 years ago for. I've been paying  
 14 an exorbitant amount to live here and they chip away more  
 15 and more at the beauty that God built. I don't care what  
 16 color they paint a wall, it's a wall, it's not what God  
 17 built, it's not why we drive 179. I've been driving it  
 18 every day several times a day for 17 years and I'm still  
 19 finding new beauty to look at.  
 20      We need to slow down and look at nature once in a  
 21 while and 179 of course needs to slow down. I didn't even  
 22 mind when we had to stop for the cows in the road. And  
 23 every once in a while you still see deer crossing the road  
 24 and they're going to cross whether there's water on both  
 25 sides or not, and if you build the five-lane highway and

L14-1      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10      11      12      13      14      15      16      17      18      19      20      21      22      23      24      25

L14-2      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10      11      12      13      14      15      16      17      18      19      20      21      22      23      24      25

The SR 179 Design Concept Study, which began in 1994, followed the overall direction and process that was developed in the Corridor Study. Improvement alternatives were focused on the existing highway corridor. Public and agency involvement was maintained throughout the project. To ensure that public input was solicited and considered, ADOT held three public meetings, a public hearing, and an open house for SR 179. In addition, 11 agency workshops were held to obtain input from the agency stakeholders, which included representatives from the City of Sedona, the Village of Oak Creek, FHWA, Coconino National Forest, Coconino County, and Yavapai County. After the public hearing ADOT worked closely with the City of Sedona and the SR 179 Sedona Design Advisory Committee, which was appointed by the City Council. The purpose of this effort was to refine the concept to mitigate potential impacts. The project team met with the Committee four times in 1999. As a result of these meetings, the design speed was reduced from 50 mph to 40 mph in the southern 2 miles of Sedona, the road width was reduced from 76 feet to 68 feet and the alignment was refined to eliminate or reduce property impacts.

ADOT has received many written comments regarding Alternative C (the Selected Alternative), including letters, post cards, comment sheets, signed petitions, and recorded oral testimony at the hearing. The written comments generally fall into one of the following categories:

- Support for Alternative C (Selected Alternative)
- Support for Alternative C with minor realignments, revisions to proposed median openings, or other revisions related to individual properties
- Support for by-pass alternatives in lieu of Alternative C, such as Red Rock Crossing

**Response to Comment L13-2 (Continued)**

- Support for Ranger Road alternative in lieu of improvements to SR 179 between Ranger Road and SR 89A
- Support for 3-lane section in lieu of Alternative C
- Support for the "No-build" alternative in the City of Sedona
- Support for the "No-build" alternative for all of SR 179

ADOT has considered all public comments and input in evaluating the viability of Alternative C. The purpose and need for the project can be best addressed with the least impact by implementing Alternative C. None of the other alternatives would fulfill the project objectives.

**Response to Comment L14-1**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

**Response to Comment L14-2**

Retaining walls have been included to minimize disturbance to the landforms and vegetation. If the retaining walls are eliminated, the heights of the cut and fill slopes will be substantially increased, the embankments will encroach into Oak Creek, and the amount of riparian vegetation and wetlands associated with Jacks Canyon Wash disturbed will also be substantially increased. The aesthetic treatment of the retaining walls and sound barriers will be designed to blend with the natural surrounds. Refer to Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA for the mitigation measure addressing the issue of aesthetics of these types of features.

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1 people are driving it 55 miles an hour. There are going to  
 2 be lot more wrecks because people are still going to be  
 3 looking at the red rocks while they're driving at that  
 4 speed.

5 Leave some charm in Sedona. Don't destroy  
 6 everything that people come here for. I just can't stress  
 7 enough how important I think it is that we not turn us into  
 8 a fast lane expressway. I think to do that would be just as  
 9 bad as to pave Schnebly Hill Road, not to mention the lives  
 10 that you're going to destroy with the businesses that are  
 11 going to be wiped out.

12 L14-3 MR. TERRY COLE: I'd like to gather some thoughts  
 13 to try to say things in positive fashion but we cannot live  
 14 in the Grand Canyon, we cannot live in Bryce Canyon, we  
 15 cannot live in Yosemite, and what a tremendous gift and  
 16 opportunity we have as Americans to be able to live in  
 17 Sedona and I equate all those areas the same and I think  
 18 being able to live in one of unique parts of the world  
 19 carries a stewardship with it that I don't believe is  
 20 reflected at all in these plans.

21 I think we're going to do more damage in the four  
 22 years of constructing this in terms of impacting on the  
 23 negative impact on the beauty of the area than occurred in  
 24 the past 10,000 years and I think that's just a travesty and  
 25 I cannot believe that's the stewardship that we were given

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### **Response to Comment L14-3**

The proposed roadway will use the same posted speed limits that currently exist. Refer to Section II. E. Build Alternatives Considered of the FEA.

### **Response to Comment L14-4**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

### **Response to Comment L14-5**

The proposed roadway section and alignment have been designed to minimize impacts to property, residences, and businesses. Approximately 10.6 acres of private land, a total of 12 parking spaces from eight businesses (west side of SR 179 near MP 313.3 at the "Y"), and four commercial building structures (including the canopy structure at the Service Station) will be affected by the proposed improvements. This is out of the approximately 36 single standing businesses and four multiple business centers. Refer to Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations in the FEA for additional information on the economic impacts.

### **Response to Comment L15-1**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

L15-1

I think we're going to do more damage in the four years of constructing this in terms of impacting on the

I cannot believe that's the stewardship that we were given

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1 in terms of the privilege to live in a community like  
 2 Sedona.

3 I'm 31 years in the business world and I'm just  
 4 appalled that they would come to a meeting with a  
 5 one-sentence justification for spending 33 million dollars.  
 6 If you were in the real world where you had to justify that,  
 7 this alternative would be thrown right out on its ear. The  
 8 real world is that you cannot justify 33 million dollars  
 9 with a one-sentence description of the rationale for doing  
 10 it and I thought it was extremely poor tonight that there  
 11 was no opportunity for input from the public. They drop  
 L15-2 their microphone and then they take off and disperse and  
 12 that in my opinion is not an adequate public hearing, and in  
 13 my opinion it's reflective on the quality of the decision  
 14 that is being made tonight.

L16 MR. ROBERT STEBBINS: I live in the Village. I  
 17 don't think it's appropriate to put a super highway through  
 18 a national treasure. I don't think that is the answer to  
 19 our traffic problem. Because when they get there and where  
 20 are they going, there's no parking, this is only going to  
 21 help the amount of traffic going and only escalate the noise  
 22 which we already have. We cannot get out of our driveway  
 23 now on the highway there's so much traffic there. You  
 24 already have four lanes from, I mean from Prescott to  
 L16-1 25 Cottonwood that they're going to put four lanes from

**Response to Comment L15-2**

ADOT has held numerous public meetings. In many cases, the input from these meetings prompted an array of additional engineering and environmental studies aimed at addressing community issues and concerns. These studies and evaluations led to many changes and added features to better blend the improvements into the surrounding environment and natural scenery. Refer to Section VI. B. Public Involvement of the FEA for a discussion of the public involvement associated with the planning process.

**Response to Comment L16-1**

In the *SR 179 Corridor Study*, completed in December 1992, various solutions to the existing and forecasted traffic problems on SR 179 were suggested by ADOT, the public, and affected agencies. Ten corridors, including the existing corridor, were identified. The corridors were evaluated on the basis of several criteria including traffic utilization, scenic sensitivity, compatibility with local land use and development plans, and the number of businesses and homes affected. The existing corridor was selected on the basis of environmental considerations, implementation costs, human and service impacts, and input from the public and affected agencies. Refer to Section II. Alternatives Considered of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) for a discussion of alternatives considered.

The most current 5-year accident data on SR 179 within the project limits indicate that 191 out of the 461 accidents reported (41 percent) occurred at intersections or driveways. The proposed alignment improvements will make the roadway safer by increasing the sight distance, not only on SR 179, but also at crossroads and driveways, which ADOT believes will assist in reducing accidents and improving safety for motorists and pedestrians.

SR 179 is the primary access route from Phoenix metropolitan area to Sedona and to the recreation areas associated with Oak Creek Canyon and the red rock formations. SR 179 currently serves as the primary access to the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest and is considered an entry corridor to the National Forest lands. The State of Arizona Parkways, Historic, and Scenic Roads Advisory Committee designate much of SR 179 within the project limits as the Red Rock Scenic Road. The project is in a uniquely scenic area of the state and attracts

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L16-1 Cottonwood into Sedona. why don't they route the traffic  
 2 that way and it will cost them nothing instead of 33 million  
 3 dollars, then make this a destination up in the Village. If  
 4 you want to see the red rocks, don't come through here like  
 5 an express train, come out from the city, park in the  
 6 pull-offs, and admire the scenery, don't clutter up our roads  
 L16-2 7 with people that want to see the red rocks that' are going  
 8 through slowly, that's what they're doing, I don't think  
 9 it's an answer.

L16-3 They approach this this evening like it was a  
 10 done deal, they came out here and said this is what we plan,  
 11 there is no give and take here, I doubt whether many people  
 12 can read these things, I can because I'm a designer, it  
 13 comes naturally, but this takes -- this is sort of like a  
 14 snow job, they really didn't attack the problem who's going  
 15 to get screwed when the thing gets in and the funneling when  
 16 it goes through town, all those businesses like Hillside at  
 17 Sedona and a few other things, they are just going to be  
 18 arbitrarily chopped off.

L16-3 Is this the way to do business here? I don't  
 19 think so. Go back to the drawing board, there's got to be  
 20 other ways, they could go Beaver Flats, they could make  
 21 something out of Schnebly Hill Road, which brings the  
 22 traffic directly into town because a lot of traffic  
 23 especially in the morning and the evening are tourists,

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### **Response to Comment L16-1 (Continued)**

local, national, and international visitors. The route traverses through the Red Rock country and provides spectacular panoramic views of eroded monuments, promontories, cliffs, and buttes.

According to the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices, interstate traffic interchange signs can depict two destination names. One supplemental sign that may list one or two destinations is also allowed. The sign at the SR 260/I-17 traffic interchange identifies Cottonwood and Payson with three destinations on the supplemental sign (Jerome, Clarkdale, and Tuzigoot National Monument). Requests to add Camp Verde, Camp Verde State Park, and Dead Horse Ranch State Park to the signs have been denied. In addition, mileage to Sedona via SR 260 and SR 89A is greater than the route from I-17 to Sedona via SR 179. ADOT is required to sign the quickest, most direct route, and in this case, SR 179 would be the most direct route.

### **Response to Comment L16-2**

Scenic pull-outs would certainly aid tourists stopping along the roadway to view the rocks. However, scenic pull-outs will not alleviate congestion problems or reduce accidents caused by the current, inadequate sight distance on the highway.

### **Response to Comment L16-3**

In the SR 179 Corridor Study, completed in December 1992, various solutions to the existing and forecasted traffic problems on SR 179 were suggested by ADOT, the public, and affected agencies. Ten corridors, including the existing corridor, were identified. The corridors were evaluated on the basis of several criteria including traffic utilization, scenic sensitivity, compatibility with local land use and development plans, and the number of businesses and homes affected. The existing corridor was selected on the basis of environmental considerations, implementation costs, human and service impacts, and input from the public and affected agencies. Refer to Section II. Alternatives Considered of the FEA for a discussion of alternatives considered.

1 they're going way into town somewhere, maybe the west side  
 2 of town, come away through the village instead of going over  
 3 by Beaver Flats or over Bell Rock Boulevard in the crossing  
 L16-3 4 into Lower Red Rock Loop that a lot of people don't like it  
 5 at least because it kills a lot of businesses doing it.  
 6 I'll give somebody else a chance.

7 L17 MS. WINIFRED CAMERON: Well, I have two  
 8 objections. One is I don't think we need a five-lane

L17-1 9 highway into a scenic area such as this, it's almost like a  
 10 national park and three lanes, three lanes at the most so  
 11 you can continue to pass, especially in certain areas where  
 12 we can't pass anymore going from the Village into Sedona, we  
 13 can't pass anymore because at best it was only, you could  
 14 pass only one car and then you had to be right behind them  
 15 to do it but now the traffic is so much, you know, there  
 16 isn't a clear lane to go into. Left turn areas, that's  
 17 fine, but I still don't think we need five lanes, not more  
 18 than three.

19 The other thing is they're talking about putting  
 20 in curbs or raised medians and curbs in places that  
 21 urbanizes it and this is not an really an urban area but  
 L17-2 22 also I think that would be the cause of many accidents,  
 23 especially the median, raised median, particularly at night,  
 24 and if it's raining I don't think it would be distinguished  
 25 well enough, people would be running into a curb, and just

#### **Response to Comment L17-1**

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was evaluated. ADOT has established level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal level of service for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location. ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

ADOT's interest in addressing the traffic congestion on SR 179 goes beyond the issue of delay to the highway users. The following guidelines and factors were considered in the analysis:

- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
- Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.

**Response to Comment L17-1 (Continued)**

- Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane/5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

**Response to Comment L17-2**

Raised curbs and medians better delineate the edges of the roadway at night than alternatives such as painted striping because they are visually more prominent as a result of the physical difference between the pavement surface and the raised curbs and median. The use of curbs, along with the use of painted striping and raised pavement markers next to the median, will enhance traffic safety for motorists and pedestrians on and along the roadway.

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1 lines there even in our towns are difficult to see at night,  
 2 but particularly when it's raining. They say they're going  
 3 to paint them white, all right, at first it might be quite  
 4 visible but that paint wears off and becomes light, you  
 5 know, dark, I mean darkens and then it's even more difficult  
 6 so I don't like this idea about raised median. I guess  
 7 that's it.

8 L18 MR. RICHARD JOHNSON: Yes, I have two major  
 9 concerns about the expansion of 179. The first is access  
 10 off of Skyline Drive onto 179. It's worth our life now to  
 11 try to get out on the highway but if they expand it to four  
 12 lanes, you have to cross two lanes of traffic and are they  
 13 going to put in a turning lane so we can turn into it? What  
 14 are they going to do because it's extremely dangerous now  
 15 and it's going to be worse when we have a four-lane highway.  
 16 My second major concern is the noise. I live  
 17 about a hundred yards off of 179 right near Saint Luke's  
 18 Episcopal Church and incidentally our houses are not shown  
 19 on the map that is displayed here in this hearing and they  
 20 were supposed to be. In any event, now we have a lot of  
 21 noise, now it's going to be a lot worse when we get four  
 22 lanes in there, are they going to put up a sound barrier of  
 23 some sort near Saint Luke's Episcopal church or that would  
 24 actually be on the west side of this four-lane highway of  
 25 179. So those are the major concerns.

**Response to Comment L18-1**

While it is true that crossing a 2-lane road takes less time than crossing a 4-lane or 5-lane road, if the existing crossroad does not have adequate sight-distance, accidents will occur whether the road is 2 lanes or 4 lanes wide. The most current 5-year accident data on SR 179 within the project limits indicate that 191 out of 461 accidents (41 percent) occurred at intersections or driveways. The proposed new horizontal and vertical geometry will make the roadway safer by increasing the sight distance, not only on SR 179, but also on the crossroads and driveways. ADOT believes that this will assist in the reduction of accidents and improvement of safety for motorists and pedestrians.

**Response to Comment L18-2**

The initial noise analysis did not recommend a sound barrier for St. Luke's because the church has direct access from SR 179. Allowing continued vehicular access to the church creates a physical gap in any structure designed to reduce penetration of highway noise. Because this gap would seriously compromise the effectiveness of a sound barrier, no such structure is recommended for the church area.

When the mapping was done in 1996, Skyline Estates was not yet developed. In March 2001, a noise analysis was performed to assess impacts to new homes, churches, and hotels. Three new residences located west of SR 179, just south of St. Luke Episcopal Church and north of Back 'O Beyond Road, were modeled for noise barriers.

A noise analysis has been prepared that considers changes in noise levels created by the proposed roadway improvements. Noise abatement measures have been recommended and their final location will be determined during final design. At that time, ADOT will meet with each property owner whose site meets the criteria for abatement established by ADOT's Noise Abatement Policy. Each owner's input will be considered regarding sound wall construction. Noise barriers will be considered only if a majority of the residents benefited by a barrier are in favor of its construction. Refer to Section IV. G. Noise of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) for the discussion of the consequences of the proposed improvements on projected noise levels within the project limits.

1 Another concern would be why do we really need  
 2 the expansion of 179 in the first place that we're going to  
 3 be facilitating the access of many more vehicles going up  
**L18-3** 4 179 and dumping them all at the Y intersection at 89A and  
 5 now what's going to happen, traffic's going to be backing up  
 6 going uptown and to the west side of Sedona and does it  
 7 really make any sense to make it easier to get into the  
 8 bottleneck, you're just going to be feeding the bottleneck  
 9 and I think that's something they really need to address.  
 10 Let's see what else we got. The parking at  
 11 Hillside and the galleries up there is rather limited and I  
 12 understand they're going to be taking away some 40 parking  
 13 spots and so now how do we get to the Hillside galleries,  
**L18-4** 14 where are we going to park? We have a lot of friends that  
 15 come into town that like to shop there or we like to go to  
 16 the restaurants, they don't have parking. If ADOT's taking  
 17 it away, something needs to be done about that also.  
 18 Another concern, Morgan Road, Morgan Road leading  
 19 off of this four-lane 179. Part of my occupation is I drive  
 20 pink jeeps, I'm on that road at least, oh, gosh, 12 to 15  
 21 times a day going from the Y down to Morgan Road. We have a  
 22 very difficult time turning now off of the road onto Morgan  
**L18-5** 23 off 179 and are they going put a turn lane in there so we  
 24 have jeeps going out, we have jeeps coming back, it's part  
 25 the tourism here in Sedona, it's very important. Also we're

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### **Response to Comment L18-3**

The proposed roadway improvements at the "Y" will add one more lane to the existing configuration on each approach. The analysis indicates that the SR 179/SR 89A intersection will operate at level of service (LOS) "C" or better in 2025 with the proposed improvements. The proposed configuration at the "Y" will allow traffic to flow more effectively through this intersection.

### **Response to Comment L18-4**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the FEA describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

### **Response to Comment L18-5**

Although there will not be a dedicated left-turn lane at Morgan Road, there will be a center left-turn lane at that location. Center left-turn lanes are included in the developed sections of the Village of Oak Creek and the city of Sedona. The construction of continuous left-turn lanes will substantially improve the operation of the roadway in the developed areas of the corridor. If the vehicle making the left turn is not blocking the through lane, traffic can move more efficiently. Refer to the typical roadway sections and preliminary plans in Appendix C in the FEA.

1 risking the lives of those people in those jeeps, that needs  
 2 to be addressed.

3 Anything else I can add. But again, I'm not  
 4 familiar with the total study they've done here. I see  
 5 we're expanding 179 from the Village of Oak Creek to Sedona  
 6 which indicates that they're concerned about the growth of  
**L18-6** 7 the village of Oak Creek and not the tourists. Are they  
 8 going to expand 179 all the way to Interstate 17 at some  
 9 point and then again we have to also look at bringing in all  
 10 these people into Sedona, do we really want to do that? You  
 11 look at the national parks, what are the national parks  
**L18-7** 12 doing, they're now putting in trains, putting in buses to  
 13 get people into the park because there's too many people  
 14 going through.

15 Sedona itself is like a park and we are fortunate  
 16 enough to live here but now we're bringing more and more and  
 17 more people in. We keep expanding and expanding, it doesn't  
 18 really make any sense if they have the alternative route  
 19 going through the red rock crossing, which I truly believe  
 20 they should do, I encourage them to expand the red rock  
**L18-8** 21 crossing, put in a nice bridge and if we had that  
 22 alternative to get to west Sedona we probably wouldn't need  
 23 to expand 179 to begin with. Those are my comments. Thank  
 24 you for your time.

25 **L19** MR. MARION MILLER: Basically what I think I  
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#### **Response to Comment L18-6**

If at some time the traffic volumes and/or accident history warrant an expansion of the 2-lane roadway from I-17 to the Village of Oak Creek, ADOT would initiate a similar scoping process including the preparation of a Design Concept Report and environmental document to evaluate the need and appropriate solution to the transportation problem.

#### **Response to Comment L18-7**

The selected roadway improvements (Alternative C) would be a benefit for the operation of a transit service. The proposed 4-lane or 5-lane roadway would enhance a system by providing free-flowing service adjacent to the curb without stopping traffic or yielding to traffic (as opposed to the case in which only shoulders were constructed). In addition, Alternative C will provide a 5-foot graded area behind the curb to allow bus riders a safe buffer from roadway traffic.

Although a tourist shuttle system has been discussed for years, there are a number of impediments to making it a reality. These include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- The Sedona region is not a "cul-de-sac", as many national parks are. A "cul-de-sac" destination attraction makes a visitor transit system more practical because tourists are captive, have come to the location for exclusive recreational purposes, and must follow whatever regulations are established for such visitation (e.g., park-and-ride and transit shuttle service).
- Tourists are often traveling through the Sedona region in a loop drive to other destinations in northern Arizona such as Jerome, Prescott, Flagstaff, and the Grand Canyon, and will leave the region via another route (e.g., SR 89A) as opposed to the route on which they arrived (presumably, in this case, SR 179).
- Visitors to the Sedona region most often come in vehicles with multiple occupants or as a family bringing associated refreshments and travel gear. They may not be receptive to transferring to a shuttle transit service without significant incentives, such as free shuttle service or discounted admissions to attractions or local establishments.

**Response to Comment L18-7 (Continued)**

A rubber-tired trolley has been in operation for more than 10 years within the City of Sedona. This trolley shuttles riders between Uptown (or the Downtown commercial district), the Gallery District (south of the Oak Creek bridge along SR 179), and West Sedona (along the SR 89A commercial district west of the "Y" intersection). This system appears to enjoy moderate use and is supported through local commercial establishment advertising. Expansion of such a system to the Village of Oak Creek is a possibility, but vehicle technology would need to be upgraded if such a system were to serve more than just a local shuttle purpose.

Currently, no intercommunity transit service exists that provides an efficient commuter service for the high number of service workers commuting into and out of the Sedona area. Although there is a strong need to develop such a service, there would be very little benefit to SR 179 due to the fact that the majority of the affordable housing available to these employees is located in Cottonwood or Flagstaff and that they use SR 89A as their commuter route.

SR 179 is the primary access route from the Phoenix metropolitan area to Sedona. The highway is classified as a Rural Minor Arterial from I-17 (MP 299.0) to the Sedona city limits (MP 308.2) and as an Urban Principal Arterial from the city limits to the intersection with SR 89A (MP 313.4). As part of the State Highway System and as an Urban Principal Arterial, the route must continue to satisfy the public demand for movement of commercial, regional, and local traffic. As such, the roadway cannot be compared to a National Park roadway which focuses on the circulation of destination traffic rather than efficient movement of commercial, regional, and local traffic.

**Response to Comment L18-8**

Red Rock Crossing is not part of the State Highway System. The 1997 Sedona Origin-Destination Study indicated that as much as 40 to 50 percent of the traffic on SR 179 is tourist/recreation-related, with the majority of trips destined for the Uptown Sedona area. Trip patterns noted along SR 179 were primarily between Uptown Sedona, the Village of Oak Creek, and SR 179 south. Yavapai County has evaluated alternative routes (Red Rock Crossing) from SR 179 to West Sedona, but the County is no longer considering these routes.

L19-1   1 would like to address is I think they should have an open  
 2 forum and let people voice their comments as to what their  
 3 feelings are. I mean it was really one way tonight and  
 4 people didn't get to do anything, the things that they could  
 5 have. There's too much separation, segregating the people  
 6 and not letting them voice opinions. I think we kind of  
 7 agreed that it's too much money spent, it could be wasted,  
 8 it could be used to do a lot of other things. The area from  
 9 Back O' Beyond will totally lose all its beauty, that's one  
 10 of the best areas and with a four-lane road in there, five  
 11 lane, it's going to completely lose also the kind of feel,  
 12 that maybe the pullouts, the scenic pullouts that they want  
 L19-2 13 to put in should be put in now and see if that would  
 14 alleviate some of the problems that they think, or if they  
 15 put the scenic pullouts there, give people an opportunity to  
 16 pull out, observe the beauty, and then they may not have the  
 17 problems going forward, so maybe it would eliminate a lot of  
 18 the other problems.

L19-3 19 The big wall that they're talking about putting  
 20 out at Hillside is just going to destroy all that natural  
 21 beauty, the big gardens that they have and people come from  
 22 all over to see them, those are just going to be gone. I  
 23 just have a feeling that as much as they try to stress that  
 24 Oak Creek won't be impacted, it's got to be. I mean, the  
 25 run off, two-lane bridges, it's just too much traffic, it's

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#### **Response to Comment L19-1**

ADOT has held numerous public meetings. In many cases, the input from these meetings prompted an array of additional engineering and environmental studies aimed at addressing community issues and concerns. These studies and evaluations led to many changes and added features to better blend the improvements into the surrounding environment and natural scenery. Refer to Section VI. B. Public Involvement of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) for a discussion of the public involvement associated with the planning process.

#### **Response to Comment L19-2**

Scenic pull-outs would certainly aid tourists stopping along the roadway to view the rocks. However, scenic pull-outs will not alleviate congestion problems or reduce accidents caused by the current, inadequate sight distance on the highway.

#### **Response to Comment L19-3**

Because of the Unique Water status of Oak Creek, appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure its protection. These mitigation measures were developed in conjunction with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). ADOT will coordinate construction activities affecting Oak Creek with all of the regulatory and affected agencies having jurisdiction over this resource. Refer to Section IV. N. Water Resources, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System of the FEA.

Section IV. N. Water Resources, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System of the FEA addresses the potential impacts to Oak Creek. The project has been reviewed by the ADEQ and the US Environmental Protection Agency. Based on their analysis of the proposed action and associated mitigation measures, no significant impacts are projected to occur in the project corridor, including work done at Oak Creek. The ADEQ will monitor construction activities to make sure the mitigation measures are implemented as outlined.

The preparation of the 404 Permit and the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be completed during final design and is required to be in place prior to ground disturbing activities. Nationwide 404 permits will be required and have been identified in

L19-3    1 going to impact the creek and it's going to be probably more  
 2 polluted than it is now and there's a lot of businesses that  
 3 have invested a lot of money, their heart, souls, and blood,  
 4 sweat, and tears in developing what they've got and ADOT  
 5 doesn't seem to care. They're just going to take all this  
 6 away. Lots of people are going to lose their businesses and  
 7 livelihood.

L20    8 MS. BARBARA MILLER: Little everyday mom and pop  
 9 shops, we don't have the money because I'm a business owner  
 10 in Flagstaff, we don't have the money to come in and they're  
 11 opening avenues for the big stores to come in, the chain  
 12 stores, and we don't want that. We want our own identity  
 13 and not something that everyone else is going to have from  
 14 one town to the next and they're just opening the door, the  
 15 avenue for those big chains to come in and gobble us up. We  
 16 don't want to be gobbled. We don't want to be like  
 17 everybody else. We're unique, that's why we're here.  
 18    The people want to come see what we have to  
 19 offer, let them slow down, take time to smell the roses. We  
 20 can all have our cake and eat it too. They pull out these  
 21 stores and businesses which is for people to come and see,  
 22 then they brought people in to see emptiness and just cement  
 23 walls, we can do that in big cities, we've got them.

L19    24 MR. MARION MILLER: Also I think the majority of  
 25 the people that live in the village of Oak Creek and between

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**Response to Comment L19-3 (Continued)**

the FEA. The permit requirements are included in the mitigation measures in the FEA to ensure their compliance during construction.

No further disturbance to designated jurisdictional waters is anticipated. Preparation of the 404 permit will be undertaken during final design, and impacts to waters of the United States will be minimized.

**Response to Comment L19-4**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the FEA describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty; Flags, Kites & Fun; the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.

**Response to Comment L20-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The proposed action will have negligible growth-inducing effects along the project corridor due to the unique jurisdictional setting in which the corridor is located and the strong comprehensive planning framework in place for the two communities through which the corridor passes. ADOT is trying to provide a roadway facility that will meet existing and future traffic demand.

**Response to Comment L20-1 (Continued)**

Zoning in the SR 179 corridor is entirely controlled by three jurisdictions: the City of Sedona, Yavapai County (which includes the unincorporated community of the Village of Oak Creek), and the Coconino National Forest. Both the city of Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek are completely surrounded by Forest Service lands and, as a result, have built-in growth management boundaries. Neither jurisdiction can expand into Forest Service lands without a land exchange. An exchange is highly unlikely due to the unique environmental quality of these lands and the existence of a variety of special interest groups and individuals who are very concerned with preserving these lands as open space.

It should be noted that Amendment 12 to the Coconino National Forest Plan of June 1998 stated that land exchanges that dispose of National Forest lands in the Sedona/Oak Creek Ecosystem would occur only if they result in acquisition of lands in the same planning area. Thus, the private land base is not expected to increase; rather it would be anticipated that any land exchanges would result in less private lands within the Sedona/Oak Creek Ecosystem because National Forest lands to be disposed of would be of a higher value than lands to be acquired.

In addition, both communities have established comprehensive planning frameworks [e.g., *Sedona Community Plan* (June 1998 last update) and the *Big Park Community Plan-Village of Oak Creek* (June 1998 last update)]. These plans include specific land use components that identify the ultimate use of all lands within the communities as well as those bordering SR 179. Due to a strong community planning commitment in both jurisdictions and the existence of special interest groups in each community, it is highly unlikely that the action of improving the SR 179 Corridor will induce any development over and above that already underway or contemplated.

L19-5 :2 here and Sedona moved here because of the quaintness and the smallness and they don't want the roadway put through this, you know, they just want the smallness, the quaintness, and they don't want the problems that come with it.

L20 5 MS. BARBARA MILLER: There's also other things that we can do like Rich said, putting in the stops and

L20-2 6 things, pullouts. Let's try those things before we spend some big bucks on it, address it and bring this back to the people to have a say-so on it, just don't say it was dealt with, this is what you get and it's over and done with, then we have to go back and correct it years later. I think it's too often the government shoving things down our throat.

L21 13 MR. DAVE SHEPHARD: I appreciate the opportunity for ADOT to come up here and allow us an opportunity to speak. We are assuming that this is a conceptual design and overall I think it's a fairly good idea but it certainly needs a lot of refinement in terms of what is going to be actually built, the details of design, things like that need to be considered are things like some to interconnect, some roads or driveways to minimize the connections to 179, allow existing businesses good access by dropping the speed limit to 25 miles an hour and provide sharper curves both horizontal and vertical which will allow this access.

L21-1 22 Some specific items might be at the Hillside. I suggested that Hillside shopping area be left alone and the

**Response to Comment L19-5**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

**Response to Comment L20-2**

Scenic pull-outs would certainly aid tourists stopping along the roadway to view the rocks. However, scenic pull-outs will not alleviate congestion problems or reduce accidents caused by the current, inadequate sight distance on the highway.

Nine pull-out areas have been identified along the SR 179 corridor. There are three proposed pull-out locations, four potential future pull-out locations, and two recently constructed pull-outs. The four potential future scenic pull-outs will be considered for construction when the Forest Service decides they are needed. The three proposed pull-outs will be constructed with the roadway improvements along with expanding the parking area at the two recently constructed North and South Bell Rock Pathway Trailheads. Refer to Section II. F. Scenic Pull-outs of the Final Environmental Assessment.

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

**Response to Comment L21-1**

Dropping the speed to 25 mph would not provide better access because it would not alleviate the traffic congestion. Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion

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L21-2 1 Oak Creek bed and breakfast be eliminated, that the box  
 2 culvert that's underneath the highway at that location be  
 3 turned into a pedestrian underpass. The local people could  
 4 build a bridge over, a pedestrian bridge over Oak Creek and  
 5 then with sidewalks the whole area is walkable, very people  
 6 friendly, Hozho and Tlaquepaque and Hillside and Garland's  
 7 and King's Ransom and so forth.

L21-4 8 There's probably a good opportunity to at the  
 9 same area combine streets like Copper Cliffs Drive, Sombart  
 10 Lane, and so forth so that the access points are minimized.  
 11 Even though it may require more right of way, it would be in  
 12 the long run much safer and probably less expensive  
 13 construction, and finally I would like to see the ADOT road  
 14 continue on to include Ranger Road up to 89A rather than the  
 15 existing road and Ranger Road improvements be included in  
 16 the work. They won't know what that means. That's about  
 17 it.

L22-1 18 MS. DAWN RUEHS: I guess my concerns would be the  
 19 economic impact on the businesses losing their parking. I  
 20 wonder why if that median is, if they were going to widen  
 21 it, if they can just put in like some more right-hand turn  
 22 lanes, if they can just put in some more right-hand turn  
 23 lanes and then eliminate the median, I think it's sort of a  
 24 wasted space and if they were going to do this, if they put  
 25 in bike paths instead of a median, if they're going to even

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#### **Response to Comment L21-1 (Continued)**

increases. Lowering the posted speed limit would also have safety implications because it would require traffic to move at a speed less than currently posted and create conditions that would frustrate the increasing number of drivers. As part of the State Highway System and as a Principal Arterial, the route must continue to satisfy the public demand for high mobility. Sharper horizontal and vertical curves would increase the accident rates because motorists would not have adequate sight distances as they pulled out from the businesses.

#### **Response to Comment L21-2**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

After the public hearing held on February 18, 1999, the alignment of SR 179 near the Inn on Oak Creek was revised. The proposed improvements will result in the acquisition of the Inn on Oak Creek. The property owner will be compensated at market value for land in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies, as amended in 1987.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty; Flags, Kites & Fun; the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.

**Response to Comment L21-3**  
Refer to Section IV. E. Section 4(f) Resources in the Final Environmental Assessment.

**Response to Comment L21-4**

To combine the local streets so that the access points are minimized, frontage roads would need to be constructed. The construction of frontage roads would require additional acquisition of right-of-way and potentially, disturbance to existing residences.

**Response to Comment L21-5**

Ranger Road is not part of the State Highway System and is owned and maintained by the City of Sedona. Therefore, ADOT cannot include it in the project design concept.

**Response to Comment L22-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

**Response to Comment L22-2**

The placement of medians in the highway may affect businesses in Oak Creek and Sedona who rely upon drop-in patrons in addition to local customers for a portion of their business. These drop-in businesses are more likely to experience a loss in revenue than other businesses that are destination businesses. These impacts are not considered to be substantial and are mitigated by the increase in future level of service (LOS), safety, and capacity of the highway. The Village of Oak Creek Association requested that raised medians be placed throughout the village for aesthetic reasons. Sedona's *Uptown Creek Area Plan* also calls for

**Response to Comment L22-2 (Continued)**

landscaped medians to enhance its retail center and reduce the visual scale of the highway in a pedestrian environment.

Raised curbs and medians better delineate the edges of the roadway at night than alternatives such as painted striping because they are visually more prominent as a result of the physical difference between the pavement surface and the raised curbs and median. The use of curbs, along with the use of painted striping and raised pavement markers next to the median, will enhance traffic safety for motorists and pedestrians on and along the roadway.

Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

Pedestrian paths will be constructed within the project area at the following locations:

- In the Village of Oak Creek on both sides of SR 179 between Ridge Trail Drive (MP 305.9) and the National Forest Boundary at the north end of the Village.
- Linked with the existing Bell Rock Pathway, a pedestrian path on the east side of SR 179 that will thus connect the Village of Oak Creek to SR 89A at SR 179 MP 313.4.
- In the city of Sedona on both sides of SR 179 between Arrow Drive (MP 312.0) and the "Y" (SR 89A).

Other than a sidewalk from the bridge to the "Y" and the Bell Rock Pathway, these sidewalks do not currently exist and will be an improvement to the pedestrian environment. Crosswalks at the intersections will aid people in crossing the 5-lane roadway. ADOT will welcome a partnership with Yavapai County on behalf of the Village of Oak Creek and the City of Sedona to fund new sidewalks as a part of the overall construction project. In addition, ADOT will assist the City in seeking Federal Enhancement Funds or money from other sources that may be available to provide new

**Response to Comment L22-2 (Continued)**

pedestrian facilities. The construction of separate bicycle lanes or paths is outside the scope of the project. ADOT has made a policy decision that it will not create bicycle lanes on state highways. However, the proposed 68-foot-wide roadway provides a 16-foot-wide outside lane width (lane line to face of curb distance). This is 4 feet wider than the standard 12-foot traffic lanes; the additional 4 feet of outside lane width would provide some separation between bicyclists, who may ride on the right side of the outside traffic lane, and motor vehicle traffic in the outside lane.

1 do anything. I guess that's my question.

2 L23 MR. RICHARD RUEHS: My opinion on this is that  
 3 the State hasn't taken into the real economic impact of  
 4 Sedona in this proposal, it's maybe an ideal plan as far as  
 5 highway and traffic flow but doesn't consider the true  
 6 economic impact on businesses that are on 179. A large  
 7 portion of Sedona's economic economy is from Tlaquepaque,  
 8 Hillside, Hozho, and other associated shops in that row that  
 9 get affected in a major way. It's kind of a gallery row of  
 10 Sedona and to not consider the impact it has on parking, on  
 11 entrance and exit, things of that is a huge neglection on  
 12 the State's part to just write those businesses off because  
 13 that's essentially what it does and it has a second and  
 14 third level effect of people like our services who sell  
 15 advertising to those businesses.

16 If our income even though we're not in that  
 17 business directly or in that zone directly, we're in it  
 18 indirectly and the same thing's true with many other service  
 19 industries, food services, other advertising, anybody that  
 20 deals with those businesses on another level gets impacted.  
 21 And then what does it do actually to 89A, has that really  
 22 been taken into consideration, if you have a fast flow of  
 23 traffic dumping into a dead-end intersection and obviously  
 24 that has a major impact to the other roads and to the  
 25 junction and potentially to a big back-up of traffic in both

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### **Response to Comment L23-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

1 directions.  
 2 So we're definitely against, I'm not against  
 3 improving traffic flow but I'm definitely against the  
 4 proposal as it stands. I think too that since Sedona is  
 5 such a strong recreational area that they should consider  
 6 major sidewalk improvements and also bike paths that would  
 7 help facilitate pedestrian traffic and recreational traffic.

8 L24-2 MR. RUSS DEMARAY: I'm totally opposed to  
 9 widening 179. I think it's unneeded and we are already are  
 10 going -- ADOT is already going to build a five-lane highway  
 11 from Cottonwood to Sedona which goes right to I-17. If they  
 12 put a big sign at I-17 that they could direct the majority,  
 13 half or more of the tourists into Sedona just as quickly as  
 14 they can through 179 to build 179 at this expense, which is  
 15 a road that goes nowhere. It makes no sense because all it  
 16 does is bring the traffic efficiently into the Y and where  
 17 do they go, they go left back to Cottonwood or right up Oak  
 18 Creek Canyon, which is a two-lane road which can't handle  
 19 any traffic because of the winding nature of it.  
 20 So it's going to ruin the ambience of Sedona by  
 21 building this road and not only that, it's going to ruin a  
 22 lot of businesses in the Sedona part of it, especially at  
 23 the Tlaquepaque, Oak Creek bridge area, so it's unneeded and  
 24 a waste of taxpayers' money.  
 25 L25 MR. DON JOHNSON: I am opposed to this plan. I

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**Response to Comment L23-2**

The outside lane in the 5-lane urban curb and gutter section is wide enough to accommodate bicycle use. A 16-foot-wide outside lane width (lane line to face of curb), versus the standard 12-foot traffic lane, provides some separation between bicyclists and vehicles.

Pedestrian paths will be constructed within the project area at the following locations:

- In the Village of Oak Creek on both sides of SR 179 between Ridge Trail Drive (MP 305.9) and the National Forest Boundary at the north end of the Village.
- Linked with the existing Bell Rock Pathway, a pedestrian path on the east side of SR 179 that will thus connect the Village of Oak Creek to SR 89A at SR 179 MP 313.4.
- In the city of Sedona on both sides of SR 179 between Arrow Drive (MP 312.0) and the "Y" (SR 89A).

Other than a sidewalk from the bridge to the "Y" and the Bell Rock Pathway, these sidewalks do not currently exist and will be an improvement to the pedestrian environment. Crosswalks at the intersections will aid people in crossing the 5-lane roadway. ADOT will welcome a partnership with Yavapai County on behalf of the Village of Oak Creek and the City of Sedona to fund new sidewalks as a part of the overall construction project. In addition, ADOT will assist the City in seeking Federal Enhancement Funds or money from other sources that may be available to provide new pedestrian facilities. The construction of separate bicycle lanes or paths is outside the scope of the project. ADOT has made a policy decision that it will not create bicycle lanes on state highways. However, the proposed 68-foot-wide roadway provides a 16-foot-wide outside lane width (lane line to face of curb distance). This is 4 feet wider than the standard 12-foot traffic lanes; the additional 4 feet of outside lane width would provide some separation between bicyclists, who may ride on the right side of the outside traffic lane, and motor vehicle traffic in the outside lane.

**Response to Comment L24-1**

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A.

**Response to Comment L24-1 (Continued)**

The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was evaluated. ADOT has established level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal level of service for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location. ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

ADOT's interest in addressing the traffic congestion on SR 179 goes beyond the issue of delay to the highway users. The following guidelines and factors were considered in the analysis:

- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
- Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.
- Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in

**Response to Comment L24-1 (Continued)**

some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane/5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

SR 179 is the primary access route from the Phoenix metropolitan area to Sedona and to the recreation areas associated with Oak Creek Canyon and the red rock formations. SR 179 currently serves as the primary access to the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest and is considered an entry corridor to the National Forest lands. The State of Arizona Parkways, Historic, and Scenic Roads Advisory Committee designate much of SR 179 within the project limits as the Red Rock Scenic Road. The project is in a uniquely scenic area of the state and attracts local, national, and international visitors. The route traverses through the Red Rock country and provides spectacular panoramic views of eroded monuments, promontories, cliffs, and buttes.

According to the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices, interstate traffic interchange signs can depict two destination names. One supplemental sign that may list one or two destinations is also allowed. The sign at the SR 260/I-17 traffic interchange identifies Cottonwood and Payson with three destinations on the supplemental sign (Jerome, Clarkdale, and Tuzigoot National Monument). Requests to add Camp Verde, Camp Verde State Park, and Dead Horse Ranch State Park to the signs have been denied. In addition, mileage to Sedona via SR 260 and SR 89A is greater than the route from I-17 to Sedona via SR 179. ADOT is required to sign the quickest, most direct route, and in this case, SR 179 would be the most direct route.

**Response to Comment L24-2**

The proposed roadway improvements at the "Y" will add one more lane to the existing configuration on each approach. The analysis

**Response to Comment L24-2 (Continued)**

indicates that the SR 179/SR 89A intersection will operate at LOS "C" or better in 2025 with the proposed improvements. The proposed configuration at the "Y" will allow traffic to flow more effectively through this intersection.

1 believe that the environmental impact is going to be too  
 2 great on the area. I believe that the economic impact is  
 3 going to be devastating for the business owners and the  
 4 business people of this community. I think that there needs  
 5 to be further study done and they need to figure out another  
 6 plan. I don't believe that the residents of this community  
 7 wish to have a five-lane freeway coming into their town and  
 8 there is no place for them to go, it's going to be emptying  
 9 out onto Highway 89 and I don't believe that that road is  
 10 going to be able to handle that kind of traffic that will be  
 11 supplied by this proposed system. I would like to see them  
 12 concentrate on improving the scenic pullouts and providing a  
 13 more consistent turn lane from the Village of Oak Creek to  
 14 the City of Sedona and to reduce the economic impact of this  
 15 project. Thank you.

L25-2 MS. PAM HARRISON: As a resident of Sedona and  
 16 person that will be affected if this five-lane highway  
 17 project happens, I would like to request that we have  
 18 another hearing and that it truly be a public hearing with  
 19 comments allowed from the audience maybe in the form of a  
 20 question and answer segment. I was extremely disappointed  
 21 tonight that we the public in this quote public hearing were  
 22 not allowed to speak.

L26-1 And just for the record, I'm totally opposed to  
 23 this five-lane project. I think that what Sedona really  
 24  
 25

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**Response to Comment L25-1**

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was evaluated. ADOT has established level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal level of service for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location. ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

ADOT's interest in addressing the traffic congestion on SR 179 goes beyond the issue of delay to the highway users. The following guidelines and factors were considered in the analysis:

- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
- Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.

**Response to Comment L25-1 (Continued)**

- Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane/5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

**Response to Comment L25-2**

Scenic pull-outs would certainly aid tourists stopping along the roadway to view the rocks. However, scenic pull-outs will not alleviate congestion problems or reduce accidents caused by the current, inadequate sight distance on the highway.

Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

Turning lanes will help with the flow of traffic and provide a certain level of increased capacity. The projected traffic volumes, however, warrant an additional travel lane to provide the capacity necessary to reduce congestion and provide an acceptable level of service. A specific turn lane is not needed with this additional travel lane; turns can be made from this additional lane.

Response to Comment L26-1

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

but none of us got the opportunity to ask questions till a  
concise way and therefore we couldn't share our feelings  
with the other people in the audience and they couldn't hear  
our feelings and we couldn't hear theirs. So I would  
definitely would like a meeting where we can have a question  
and answer session and not straight answers. Thank you.

14 L28 MR. JOHN SCHAEFER: Well, I'm in favor of the  
15 five-lane urban highway they have on the alternate C which  
16 just has the two lanes and the center left-hand turn lane,  
17 not the raised median for the area that's in Sedona from  
18 the -- what is it, Back O' Beyond Road, okay, and I think  
19 that is narrower than the alternative so I would be more in  
20 favor of that so it would take less right of way structures,  
21 parking, vegetation, all that stuff. Okay, thank you.

(Concluded at 8:00 p.m.)

◆ ◆ ◆

- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
  - Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.

**Yoder & McFate Reporting Service, Inc.**  
Phoenix, AZ

**Response to Comment L26-1 (Continued)**

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**Response to Comment L27-1**

Refer to Section VI. B. Public Involvement of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) for a discussion of public involvement in the planning process.

**Response to Comment L27-2**

ADOT has held numerous public meetings. In many cases, the input from these meetings prompted an array of additional engineering and environmental studies aimed at addressing community issues and concerns. These studies and evaluations led to many changes and added features to better blend the improvements into the surrounding environment and natural scenery. Refer to Section VI. B. Public Involvement of the FEA for a discussion of the public involvement associated with the planning process.

**Response to Comment L28-1**

Left-center turn lanes are effective in more developed areas where cross streets occur at such frequent intervals that raised medians are not feasible. The raised medians provide the opportunity for aesthetic relief and safer separation of traffic.

**Response to Comment L28-2**

A narrower roadway would have a smaller footprint and less impact on the landscape. The proposed project will incorporate several features that will help reduce the footprint, including the

**Response to Comment L28-2 (Continued)**

construction of guardrails and retaining walls. Lowering the design speed of the roadway from 50 mph to 40 mph between MP 310 and MP 312 and keeping the design speed at 35 mph between MP 312 and MP 313.4 will also help minimize the footprint.

41

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4  
5  
6 CERTIFICATE  
7

8 I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings had upon  
9 the foregoing public hearing are contained in the shorthand  
10 record made by me thereof, and that the foregoing 40 pages  
11 constitute a full, true, and correct transcript of said  
12 shorthand record, all done to the best of my skill and  
13 ability.

14  
15 Dated at Phoenix, Arizona, this 3rd day of March,  
16 1999.



17  
18  
19 DEBORAH L. MOREASH, RPR  
20 Court Reporter  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Public Hearing to Comment on the  
Draft Environmental Assessment for  
Recommended Improvements to SR 179 Between  
Milepost 304.5 to the Junction of SR 89A

Big Park Community School Gymnasium  
25 West Saddlehorn Court  
Sedona, Arizona

Thursday, February 18, 1999  
6:00 p.m.

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

COPY

DARYL L. SCHLOSSER  
Court Reporter

2

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**PROCEEDINGS**

3

L29 MS. REYNOLDS DILKS: I'm Karen Reynolds Dilks.  
 I'm the general manager for Hillside Shops & Galleries &  
 Hozho Distinctive Shops and Galleries. We're located at 671  
 Highway 179 and 431 Highway 179 respectively. Hillside and  
 Hozho appreciate ADOT's efforts in trying to make Highway  
 179 a more safe route. However, we do not agree with a  
 four-lane highway with a median as a solution. The economic  
 impact study of Sedona states the reason people visit Sedona  
 is because of its beauty and its high end art and retail  
 shops.

I'm afraid the proposed plan will impair both.  
 In most resort or environmentally sensitive areas the  
 Department of Transportation works with the community and  
 designs passing lanes, turning lanes and deceleration  
 lanes. Highway 179 is a treasured scenic highway and should  
 remain so.

Additionally, Hillside and Hozho have been  
 working with the Mainstreet Program, Garlands, Tlaquepaque  
 to create a more friendly pedestrian walkway for tourists.  
 ADOT's proposed plan will destroy this entire concept. On  
 January 16, 1997 I met with the following people from ADOT:  
 Michael "Doc" Sterling, right-of-way agent; Troy Suverkrup,  
 permit administration group; John E. Harper, traffic

**Response to Comment L29-1**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty; Flags, Kites & Fun; the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.

**Response to Comment L29-2**

The State of Arizona's Parkways, Historic and Scenic Roads Advisory Committee has reviewed and concurred with the FEA finding that the scenic designation of the roadway will not change with the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in the FEA. Refer to Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA.

**Response to Comment L29-3**

Pedestrian paths will be constructed within the project area at the following locations:

- In the Village of Oak Creek on both sides of SR 179 between Ridge Trail Drive (MP 305.9) and the National Forest Boundary at the north end of the Village.
  - Linked with the existing Bell Rock Pathway, a pedestrian path on the east side of SR 179 that will thus connect the Village of Oak Creek to SR 89A at SR 179 MP 313.4.
  - In the city of Sedona on both sides of SR 179 between Arrow Drive (MP 312.0) and the "Y" (SR 89A).
- Other than a sidewalk from the bridge to the "Y" and the Bell Rock Pathway, these sidewalks do not currently exist and will be an improvement to the pedestrian environment. Crosswalks at the intersections will aid people in crossing the 5-lane roadway. Enhanced treatment of the center left-turn lane will be considered

**Response to Comment L29-3 (Continued)**

4 during final design. These features will help improve the  
 5 pedestrian environment in the Uptown Creek Area.

**Response to Comment L29-4**

1 Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the FEA  
 2 describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have  
 3 on the community. While there are virtually no improvements  
 4 without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken  
 5 to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During  
 6 construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

7 When Hillside's plans were first drafted, the  
 8 widening of 179 did not impact Hillside at all, ADOT's Plans  
 9 A & B. Somewhere between July and November 1996 the plans  
 10 changed and the proposed amount of spaces taken by the  
 11 right-of-way would make Hillside inoperable. Thus, this was  
 12 the purpose of the meeting. All parties walked the site and  
 13 agreed the proposed plan would totally impact the business  
 14 at Hillside, and ADOT and BRW clearly indicated the plans  
 15 would be altered to minimize any loss of parking.  
 16 Hillside also spent an additional \$25,000 on  
 17 architectural and engineering changes to accommodate ADOT's  
 18 plans by moving the restaurant back. Hillside's expansion  
 19 plans were then approved by the City and the two and a half  
 20 million dollar expansion project was completed early spring  
 21 1998. Page 30 of the Draft Environmental Assessment  
 22 incorrectly states that Hillside has over 200 parking  
 23 spaces. Hillside has a total of 160 parking spaces. I will  
 24 submitting A101 of Hillside's building plans in writing to  
 25 ADOT.

**Response to Comment L29-6**

Previously addressed in Response to Comment 29-1.

5           The employees at any given time take an average  
1       of 74 spaces. ADOT's recently proposed widening and taking  
2       41 parking spaces will leave Hillside with 40 parking spaces  
3       accommodating 26 stores, a 100 seat restaurant and a 150  
4       seat restaurant. On Valentine's Day alone one restaurant  
5       served over 330 lunches. Hillside already has a severe  
6       parking problem. How will no parking effect sales? How  
7       will no parking effect Hillside's ability to lease space?  
8  
9       Does ADOT really want to destroy a multi million dollar  
10      center supporting 26 shops and two of Sedona's most  
11      successful restaurants? The present plan from ADOT will  
12      totally put Hillside out of business as other retail  
13      businesses in Sedona.

14       In addition, the design concept study doesn't  
15      really give a clear picture of the impact the widening of  
16      the highway has to the aesthetics of the businesses by  
17      destroying the landscape barriers. For instance, the  
18      roadway goes up to the wall at Tlaquepaque within a few feet  
19      of the Inn at Oak Creek. Within a couple weeks we will be  
20      spending \$30,000 on landscaping at Hozho per city  
21      requirements which will later be torn out when the road is  
22      put in and the highway comes within feet of the buildings at  
23      Hozho.

24       We strongly recommend that ADOT reevaluate their  
25      present design and take into consideration the environment

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1 and the impact to Sedona business people.  
2 This is from Prairie Fire Gallery and Tearoom,  
3 Amy Lionberger, 671 Highway 179, Sedona 86336. As a  
4 business owner at Hillside Courtyard and a resident of  
5 Sedona, I am writing this letter in vehement opposition to  
6 the proposed plan to widen Highway 179. This project would  
7 not only ruin the most beautiful entrance to the town of  
8 Sedona, but would destroy many businesses along our fine  
9 Gallery Row.

10 L30 As we drive our cars along the current Highway  
11 179, we are already aware of tourists and locals driving  
12 faster than the allowed speed limit. This causes some  
13 visitors to fly by many of the most beautiful shops and  
14 galleries in Sedona that make up Gallery Row. As a shopping  
15 center, both ownership and merchant associations have spent  
16 tens of thousands of dollars over the years promoting our  
17 center as one of Sedona's premier shopping experiences.  
18 We have spent tens of thousands of dollars  
19 expanding our frontage and parking. The point is to slow  
20 down the flow of cars allowing visitors to experience the  
21 magnificent sculpture, water features and to see what  
22 Hillside shops have to offer. Any expansion of our charming  
23 two-lane highway would make Highway 179 a speed zone.  
24 Under the current proposed plan by ADOT, the flow  
25 along Highway 179 would be under construction for so long

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**Response to Comment L30-1**

The proposed roadway will use the same posted speed limits that currently exist. Refer to Section II. E. Build Alternatives Considered of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA).

1 that it would cause most locals who absolutely did not have  
 L30-2 2 to take 179 to completely bypass this highway for fear of  
 3 getting caught in a slowdown. Much of our annual business  
 4 depends on our local trade. Signs posted at the off ramp of  
 5 179 and the 17 regarding construction would cause many  
 L30-3 6 tourists to bypass this highway as well, greatly' damaging  
 7 our daily tourist trade. Frankly, the shops and famous  
 8 restaurants here at Hillside could not survive this.  
 9 In addition, if this plan calls for removal of  
 10 any parking spaces from Hillside it would be devastating to  
 11 the shops and restaurants. We have just added, at  
 L30-4 12 tremendous expense, additional parking and still we do not  
 13 have enough. The shopping center would have to close down  
 14 permanently. This would cause irreparable damage to the  
 15 town of Sedona and to the lives of every merchant who has  
 16 invested so heavily in their business.  
 17 I therefore totally oppose any plan to widen  
 18 Highway 179 and request that an alternative route be  
 19 studied. I would enter into a class action law suit if  
 20 necessary to save Hillside, Hozho and any other fine  
 21 buildings along 179. Sincerely, Amy Lionberger.

22 L31 This is from Andrea Lee, Saddlebags, 617 Highway  
 23 179. It's dated 2-18-99. To whom it may concern: Should  
 24 ADOT continue with its plan to widen Highway 179 into a  
 25 four-lane highway, Hillside Courtyard and Marketplace would

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#### **Response to Comment L30-2**

The Sedona Community Plan (updated in 1998) noted that over 60 percent of all taxable expenditures in the categories of retail, lodging, and service industry expenditures were attributed to visitors. There would be some related impacts to the existing retail businesses within the project limits during construction. The magnitude of the potential impacts is not considered substantial for several reasons: 1) the roadway would not be closed to motorists; 2) access to all business and residential properties would be maintained; 3) without the proposed improvements, traffic congestion, particularly on the weekends, would substantially increase; 4) access into the Sedona/Oak Creek area would continue on SR 89A from Cottonwood and through Oak Creek Canyon; and 5) timely information regarding the construction schedule would be provided to the public, as well as clear and proper signage so that motorists can avoid surprises.

#### **Response to Comment L30-3**

ADOT will make all reasonable efforts to maintain vehicular access to properties that rely on SR 179. Traffic will be managed by detailed traffic control plans and by procedures and guidelines specified in the Arizona Department of Transportation *Traffic Control Manual for Highway Construction and Maintenance*.

Closure of SR 179 will not be allowed for other than very short periods. Final construction sequencing/phasing, which will be determined during design, will stipulate that significant construction activities that would disrupt traffic will be performed during off-peak hours.

Access to adjacent properties will be maintained during construction.

During construction, ingress and egress to and from driveways and side roads will be maintained at all times. There will be some related economic impacts to the existing retail businesses within the project limits during construction. The economic impacts are not considered substantial for several reasons: 1) the roadway will not be closed to motorists except for the very brief time required to protect the traveling public, such as during the movement of heavy equipment; 2) access to all business and residential properties will be maintained; 3) access into the Sedona/Oak Creek area will continue on SR 89A from Cottonwood and through Oak Creek

**Response to Comment L30-3 (Continued)**

Canyon; and 4) standard public information regarding the construction schedule will be provided. Surprises will be minimized by clear and appropriate signage. During driveway reconstruction, one side of the driveway will be constructed at a time in order to maintain access.

During the design phase, ADOT would evaluate working during the evening hours, the timing of the construction (avoiding peak tourism season), and restricting construction to the weekdays. The trade-off is that, relatively speaking, the more restrictions placed on the contractor, the longer the construction would last. ADOT will work with the City of Sedona and the media to encourage motorists to avoid travel on SR 179 during high-volume periods.

**Response to Comment L30-4**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

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8  
 1 be forced to close down due to the lack of sufficient  
 L31-1 2 parking. Please consider this before making a final  
 3 decision. Yours truly, Andrea Lee, agent for the owner.  
 4  
 L32 5 This is from Chris Favorite, Favorite Clothing,  
 6 671 Highway 179, February 18, 1999. To whom it may  
 7 concern: Please be informed that I oppose the proposed ADOT  
 8 plan to widen 179 and take parking from the Hillside retail  
 9 complex. Hillside has a severe parking problem. Any  
 10 further loss of parking would be detrimental to the complex  
 11 and my retail business. Four lanes coming into Sedona would  
 12 adversely affect too many businesses and Sedona in general.  
 13 Sincerely, Chris Favorite.  
 14 L33 This is from Robert Harmon, Wolfwalker Galleries,  
 15 671 Highway 179, Sedona 86336. It's dated February 17,  
 16 1999. To ADOT, subject widening of Highway 179. Gentlemen,  
 17 as a business owner and resident in Sedona I find your plans  
 18 to widen 179 from the Village of Oak Creek to the Y  
 19 incomprehensible and ill conceived.  
 20 My place of business is at the Hillside  
 21 Courtyard. With the expansion here and new restaurant we  
 22 are finally getting the traffic that can support my  
 23 business. Your plan calls for the elimination of many of  
 24 our precious parking spaces. This in itself will jeopardize  
 25 my business and lower your tax base.  
 An expansion of Highway 179 is not the answer.

**Response to Comment L31-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

**Response to Comment L32-1**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

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**Response to Comment L33-1 (Continued)**

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**Response to Comment L33-1 (Continued)**

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**Response to Comment L33-2**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

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1 There are alternatives that should go forward. You at ADOT  
 2 should have the capability to see the extreme mistake being  
 3 taken here. I, as a resident, have spoken to no one who  
 4 wants the expansion either personally or in business.  
 L33-3 5 Rather 179 should remain as it is adding to the charm that  
 6 draws millions of visitors each year. These are visitors  
 7 that Wolfwalker Galleries and the State of Arizona depend  
 8 upon for income.  
 9 I do not support this plan nor will I support any  
 10 assemblymen, congressmen, senators or governor that does.  
 11 Sincerely, Robert Harmon, owner.  
 12 L34 Sedona Clothing Company from Todd Jensen,  
 13 manager, 1710 Highway 89A, Sedona, Arizona 86336. It's  
 14 dated February 16, 1999. To ADOT, Highway 179 widening. I  
 15 am writing this letter to voice my concern regarding the  
 16 proposed expansion of Highway 179. As a Sedona resident and  
 17 businessman, I am all too aware of the existing traffic  
 18 problem in and around Sedona.  
 19 While it is painfully obvious that something must  
 20 be done to curtail the log jamming phenomena that plagues  
 21 the byways connecting our Northern Arizona communities, I  
 22 feel very strongly that the present proposal is not the  
 23 right course of action. Indeed, I feel this proposal and  
 L34-1 24 the damage it will inflict upon the environment as well as  
 25 local business is excessive and unfair.

YODER & MCFADE REPORTING SERVICE, INC.

### Response to Comment L33-3

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

This area will continue to attract visitors from all over the world, regardless of traffic conditions on SR 179. Also, population growth will continue to contribute to the growth of traffic in Sedona – the Sedona Community Plan indicates an average annual population growth rate of 2.6 percent between 1997 and 2010.

### Response to Comment L34-1

The proposed roadway improvements will have no substantial adverse impacts on plant or wildlife species within the study area because the existing plant and wildlife habitat adjacent to the highway corridor has already been degraded in the urbanized areas where construction will take place. Wildlife crossing the roadway will be accommodated by the use of specially constructed box culverts, limited vegetation removal, prompt revegetation of disturbed areas, and the construction of water collection sources on either side of the highway. Refer to Section IV. I. Vegetation and Wildlife of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA).

1       While progress does not occur without some  
 2       expense, the burden this proposal places is prohibiting to  
 3       many of the local merchants who rely on the visibility of  
 4       their business to Highway 179. Furthermore, as a Hillside  
 5       merchant, the issue of available parking to accommodate  
 6       consumers has always been an issue of great concern and  
 7       difficulty.

L34-2      8       This current proposal regarding Highway 179  
 9       expansion and subsequent loss of parking, 41 spaces at  
 10       Hillside, would be devastating to the success and livelihood  
 11       of our company's two stores located there. This proposal is  
 12       particularly frustrating given the fact that there seems to  
 13       be ample space available on the far side of the highway to  
 14       meet the demands of local traffic without having to cut into  
 15       Hillside's already limited parking area.

In the interests of the local businesses where  
 tax revenue comprises a significant portion of the money  
 funding this project, I humbly request that this proposal be  
 reconsidered in favor of a plan which is more equitable for  
 all interests concerned. Sincerely, Todd Jensen, manager.

L35      This is from Geoffrey Roth, P.O. Box 2727, Sedona  
 22       Arizona. It's dated February 18, 1999. To the Arizona  
 23       Department of Transportation. To whom it may concern: As a  
 24       local business that will be directly impacted by the ADOT  
 25       proposal to widen 179 into a four-lane highway, we would

YODER &amp; MCFADE REPORTING SERVICE, INC.

**Response to Comment L34-2**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the FEA describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

The proposed roadway section and alignment have been designed to minimize impacts to property, residences, and businesses. Approximately 10.6 acres of private land, a total of 12 parking spaces from eight businesses (west side of SR 179 near MP 313.3 at the "Y"), and four commercial building structures (including the canopy structure at the Service Station) will be affected by the proposed improvements. This is out of the approximately 36 single standing businesses and four multiple business centers. Refer to Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations in the FEA for additional information on the economic impacts.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty; Flags, Kites & Fun; the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.

1 like to express our strong objections. The section of road  
 2 to be affected winds through a beautiful area and is  
 3 currently listed as a scenic route. This would cease to be  
 4 the case with the suggested enlargement.

5 We believe that the proposal, as it stands, would  
 6 be detrimental to Sedona residents and visitors, and we feel  
 L36-1 7 that there are other options that should be explored before  
 8 acting upon such an extreme measure. Geoffrey Roth, LTD.

9 L36 This is from Thora Hodge, owner of Sedona Instant  
 10 Print located at 1225 West Highway 89A, Sedona, Arizona,  
 11 February 18, 1999. To whom it may concern at ADOT: The  
 12 full extent of ADOT's plans for the Sedona area has just  
 13 come to my attention. I am strongly opposed to it. A  
 L36-1 14 four-lane highway will ruin the whole aesthetics of the  
 15 present road, not to mention the destruction of businesses  
 16 that will be affected.

17 Two of the main drawing cards of Sedona, besides  
 18 the red rock beauty, are the small town charm and the small  
 19 shops. With a four-lane highway people will speed right on  
 20 through destroying the economic basis of this city.

21 Reestablishing Red Rock Crossing would reduce some of the  
 L36-2 22 traffic stress that seems to concern you. It would be far  
 23 less costly than building wider roads. Sincerely, Thora  
 24 Hodge, owner of Sedona Instant Print.

25 L37 This is from Sylvia Ann's, 671 Highway 179,

YODER & MCFADE REPORTING SERVICE, INC.

**Response to Comment L35-1**

In the SR 179 Corridor Study, completed in December 1992, various solutions to the existing and forecasted traffic problems on SR 179 were suggested by ADOT, the public, and affected agencies. Ten corridors, including the existing corridor, were identified. The corridors were evaluated on the basis of several criteria including traffic utilization, scenic sensitivity, compatibility with local land use and development plans, and the number of businesses and homes affected. The existing corridor was selected on the basis of environmental considerations, implementation costs, human and service impacts, and input from the public and affected agencies. Refer to Section II. Alternatives Considered of the Final Environmental Assessment for a discussion of alternatives considered.

**Response to Comment L36-1**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the FEA describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

**Response to Comment L36-2**

Red Rock Crossing is not part of the State Highway System. The 1997 Sedona Origin-Destination Study indicated that as much as 40 to 50 percent of the traffic on SR 179 is tourist/recreation-related, with the majority of trips destined for the Uptown Sedona area. Trip patterns noted along SR 179 were primarily between Uptown Sedona, the Village of Oak Creek and SR 179 south. Yavapai County has evaluated alternative routes (Red Rock Crossing) from SR 179 to West Sedona, but the County is no longer considering these routes.

12  
 1 Sedona, Arizona, Sylvia Ann Combs, owner. It's dated  
 2 February 17, 1999. To ADOT, widening of 179. This letter  
 3 states my position of opposing the widening of Highway 179.  
 4 I have been in business at Hillside for the past ten years.  
 5 The first few years at Hillside were a bit difficult because  
 6 of ingress/egress problems and visibility problems. Since  
 7 the expansion has been completed business is flourishing.  
 8 Now our problem is parking. We do not have  
 9 enough presently. If ADOT takes the amount of parking  
 L37-1 10 spaces proposed in the present plan it will make Hillside  
 11 and all tenants go out of business. Also I believe people  
 12 visit Sedona because of its beauty and high end shops. A  
 13 four-lane divided highway will destroy this. Please  
 14 redesign your project. Sincerely, Sylvia Ann Combs.

15 L38 Mary Pat's, 671 Highway 179, Sedona, Arizona,  
 16 February 18, 1999. I am adamantly opposed to the widening  
 17 of Highway 179 and the impact it will have on Hillside, 671  
 18 Highway 179. I have had a successful business at Hillside  
 19 for almost four years. Hillside already has a severe  
 20 parking problem. The proposed taking of 41 spaces will put  
 L38-1 21 Hillside and all its tenants out of business. Hillside  
 22 cannot spare even a single parking space. The large number  
 23 of employees and the tremendous success of both restaurants  
 24 already leaves Hillside with too little parking. Please  
 25 rethink your widening of Highway 179. Sincerely, Mary Pat

YODER &amp; MCFADE REPORTING SERVICE, INC.

**Response to Comment L37-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards. Because Hillside will not lose any parking spaces, the text related to the number of parking spaces at that location has been eliminated from the FEA.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty; Flags, Kites & Fun; the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.

**Response to Comment L38-1**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards. Because Hillside will not lose any parking spaces, the text related to the number of parking spaces at that location has been eliminated from the Final Environmental Assessment.

1 Yancy, Mary Pat's Photography and Intimate Apparel.  
 2 L39 Javelina Cantina, 671 Highway 179, Sedona,  
 3 Arizona. It's written by Ken Fega, one of the owners. It's  
 4 dated February 17, 1999. Javelina Cantina and Shugrue's  
 5 Hillside Grill are adamantly opposed to the proposed plan  
 6 from ADOT regarding the widening of Highway 179.' The  
 7 quaintness of Sedona would be destroyed. Passing lanes,  
 8 turn lanes and deceleration lanes should be used instead.  
 9 In addition, the fact the plan calls for taking  
 10 of 41 parking spaces at Hillside which is over one quarter  
 11 of the entire parking would virtually put both of my  
 12 restaurants, over 250 seating capacity, and the entire  
 13 center out of business. Hillside already experiences a  
 14 parking shortage due to the large number of employees that  
 15 work at the complex and the fact that both restaurants and  
 16 shops are extremely popular to locals and tourists alike.  
 17 Both restaurants average 250 lunches per day.  
 18 This is 500 lunches being served on a daily basis. On  
 19 Valentine's Day alone we served 330 lunches and people  
 20 commented they had to drive through the parking lot for over  
 21 20 minutes waiting for a parking space. Taking even one  
 22 parking space from Hillside would create a hardship, let  
 23 alone 41. This proposed concept would put 30 tenants out of  
 24 business. Please reconsider your plan. Sincerely, Ken  
 25 Fega.

YODER & MCSTATE REPORTING SERVICE, INC.

**Response to Comment L39-1**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified that reduce visual impacts to the setting. They are listed in the FEA at the beginning of the document as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

**Response to Comment L39-2**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

Because Hillside will not lose any parking spaces, the text related to the number of parking spaces at that location has been eliminated from the FEA.

The proposed roadway section and alignment have been designed to minimize impacts to property, residences, and businesses. Approximately 10.6 acres of private land, a total of 12 parking spaces from eight businesses (west side of SR 179 near MP 313.3 at the "Y"), and four commercial building structures (including the canopy structure at the Chevron Service Station) will be affected by the proposed improvements. These are out of the approximately 36 single-standing businesses and four multiple business centers. Refer to Section IV. B. Social and Economic

**Response to Comment L39-2 (Continued)**  
Considerations in the FEA for additional information on the economic impacts.

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the FEA describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

Response to Comment L40-1

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified that reduce visual impacts to the setting. They are listed in the FEA at the beginning of the document as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

Number one, it will destroy one of the most beautiful drives in the country. Number two, it will have an extremely negative impact on all our businesses during the lengthy construction period. I think the addition of a center lane is more appropriate. I definitely do not want to see Highway 179 widened to four lanes.

Sincerely, Erika

13 , Hildegard Germain, owner, Sofia Boutique.  
14 L41 This is from Rubylee Smith, manager of Sofia  
15 Boutique, 671 Highway 179, Sedona, Arizona 86336. It's  
16 dated 2-16-99, proposed widening of Highway 179. I will no  
17 be able to attend the public hearing on February 18, 1999 or  
18 the proposed widening of Highway 179. I feel there will be  
19 a very negative impact on all of us who must use Highway 179.

L41-1

every day to come to work and drive home again.  
The impact on the businesses will be even greater  
because people will not want to struggle through the  
construction to get to the shops. This could be very  
detrimental to many businesses. I'm strongly opposed to the  
widening of Highway 179. Rubylee Smith, manager of Sofia

TWO

There will be some unavoidable traffic delays caused by project implementation. However, ADOT will make all reasonable efforts to maintain vehicular access to properties that rely on SR 179. Traffic will be managed by detailed traffic control plans and by procedures and guidelines specified in the *Arizona Department of Transportation Traffic Control Manual for Highway Construction and Maintenance*.

Closure of SR 179 will not be allowed for other than very short periods. Final construction sequencing/phasing, which will be determined during design, will stipulate that significant construction activities that would disrupt traffic will be performed during off-peak hours.

Access to adjacent properties will be maintained during construction.

During construction, ingress and egress to and from driveways and side roads will be maintained at all times. There will be some related economic impacts to the existing retail businesses within the project limits during construction. The economic impacts are not considered substantial for several reasons: 1) the roadway will not be closed to motorists except for the very brief time required to protect the traveling public, such as during the movement of heavy equipment; 2) access to all business and residential properties will be maintained; 3) access into the Sedona/Oak Creek area will continue on SR 89A from Cottonwood and through Oak Creek Canyon; and 4) standard public information regarding the construction schedule will be provided. Surprises will be minimized by clear and appropriate signage. During driveway reconstruction, one side of the driveway will be constructed at a time in order to maintain access.

**Response to Comment L40-1 (Continued)**

During the design phase, ADOT would evaluate working during the evening hours, the timing of the construction (avoiding peak tourism season), and restricting construction to the weekdays. The trade-off is that, relatively speaking, the more restrictions placed on the contractor, the longer the construction would last. ADOT will work with the City of Sedona and the media to encourage motorists to avoid travel on SR 179 during high-volume periods.

**Response to Comment L40-2**

Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

**Response to Comment L41-1**

There will be some unavoidable traffic delays caused by project implementation. However, ADOT will make all reasonable efforts to maintain vehicular access to properties that rely on SR 179. Traffic will be managed by detailed traffic control plans and by procedures and guidelines specified in the *Arizona Department of Transportation Traffic Control Manual for Highway Construction and Maintenance*.

Closure of SR 179 will not be allowed for other than very short periods. Final construction sequencing/phasing, which will be determined during design, will stipulate that significant construction activities that would disrupt traffic will be performed during off-peak hours.

Access to adjacent properties will be maintained during construction.

During construction, ingress and egress to and from driveways and side roads will be maintained at all times. There will be some related economic impacts to the existing retail businesses within the project limits during construction. The economic impacts are not considered substantial for several reasons: 1) the roadway will

**Response to Comment L41-1 (Continued)**

not be closed to motorists except for the very brief time required to protect the traveling public, such as during the movement of heavy equipment; 2) access to all business and residential properties will be maintained; 3) access into the Sedona/Oak Creek area will continue on SR 89A from Cottonwood and through Oak Creek Canyon; and 4) standard public information regarding the construction schedule will be provided. Surprises will be minimized by clear and appropriate signage. During driveway reconstruction, one side of the driveway will be constructed at a time in order to maintain access.

**Response to Comment L41-2**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

15

Boutique.

L42 This is from Sheillah Wilson, manager, Compass Rose Gallery, Hillside, 671 Highway 179, Sedona, Arizona, February 17, 1999. This is to inform you of my concern regarding the current proposed widening of Highway 179.

Although I agree that an improved road with a center turn lane and deceleration lanes may be appropriate, the proposed four-lane highway with a massive median is unnecessary and very unwise. I am vehemently opposed to the current proposal as it stands.

I manage a retail gallery at Hillside and we are appalled at the prospect of losing nearly one-third of our already scarce parking spaces if this proposal, as it stands, were to be approved. The retaining wall that would be built would be aesthetically unbecoming and economically destructive to the financial well being of the stores and galleries here.

Overall this project would negatively impact the economic health and viability of all of Sedona's retail and tourist industry. Highway 179 is one of the most scenic roads in the area and the proposed highway would drastically change that. I appeal to your heartfelt senses to reassess

L42-4 21 your approach and come up with a more mediated solution that is a win-win for all concerned parties impacted by this decision. Thank you for your serious reconsideration in

YODER &amp; MCFAFE REPORTING SERVICE, INC.

**Response to Comment L42-1**

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was evaluated. ADOT has established level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal level of service for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location. ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

ADOT's interest in addressing the traffic congestion on SR 179 goes beyond the issue of delay to the highway users. The following guidelines and factors were considered in the analysis:

- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
- Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.

**Response to Comment L42-1 (Continued)**

- Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane/5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

**Response to Comment L42-2**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

**Response to Comment L42-3**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified that reduce visual impacts to the setting. They are listed in the FEA at the beginning of the document as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

**Response to Comment L42-3 (Continued)**

The proposed roadway section and alignment have been designed to minimize impacts to property, residences, and businesses. Approximately 10.6 acres of private land, a total of 12 parking spaces from eight businesses (west side of SR 179 near MP 313.3 at the "Y"), and four commercial building structures (including the canopy structure at the Service Station) will be affected by the proposed improvements. This is out of the approximately 36 single standing businesses and four multiple business centers. Refer to Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations in the FEA for additional information on the economic impacts.

Business visibility will be maintained unless otherwise determined during final design. No sound barriers are proposed in front of businesses. Retaining walls and sound walls will be treated with a patterned or textured surface as appropriate. The treatment of these features will be addressed during final design and will be coordinated with the Forest Service, ADOT, Village of Oak Creek, and the City of Sedona. Further aesthetic treatments will be considered during final design. Refer to Section IV. L. Visual Resources in the FEA for a description of the proposed mitigation measures for the treatment of slopes, retaining walls, and sound barriers.

**Response to Comment L42-4**

The *Sedona Community Plan* (updated in 1998) noted that over 60 percent of all taxable expenditures in the categories of retail, lodging, and service industry expenditures were attributed to visitors. There would be some related impacts to the existing retail businesses within the project limits during construction. The magnitude of the potential impacts is not considered substantial for several reasons: 1) the roadway would not be closed to motorists; 2) access to all business and residential properties would be maintained; 3) without the proposed improvements, traffic congestion, particularly on the weekends, would substantially increase; 4) access into the Sedona/Oak Creek area would continue on SR 89A from Cottonwood and through Oak Creek Canyon; and 5) timely information regarding the construction schedule would be provided to the public, as well as clear and proper signage so that motorists can avoid surprises.

16  
 1 this important matter. Sincerely, Sheilah Wilson, manager,  
 2 Compass Rose Gallery, Hillside.  
 3 L43 This is from Tom Eversmann, Golden Horse  
 4 Needlpoint, 671 Highway 179, Sedona, Arizona 86336. Letter  
 5 dated February 17, 1999. Arizona Department of  
 6 Transportation delivered at public hearing, Big Park  
 7 Community School, 25 West Saddlehorn Court, Village of Oak  
 8 Creek, Arizona. TRACS Project No. 179 YV 304 H 3414 01L.  
 9 Dear ADOT representative. I am writing this  
 10 letter to register our protest to the above project. We  
 11 expect that the widening of Highway 179 will have a severely  
 12 negative impact on our business as well as for all Hillside  
 13 merchants. This project will eliminate significant amounts  
 L43-1 14 of parking on the lower level where our store, B-St-4, is  
 15 located. Given the demographics of our customers, who tend  
 16 to be older, convenience is essential.  
 17 We selected our location with accessibility as a  
 18 key factor. With already congested parking areas, any  
 19 reduction in parking availability will inevitably adversely  
 20 affect our business. Should the proposed expansion come to  
 21 pass, it seems clear that closure of our business, as well  
 22 as others in Hillside, will be a likely outcome. Thank you  
 23 for your attention. Sincerely, Tom Eversmann.  
 24 L44 The last one. Scherer Gallery, Marty Scherer,  
 25 Hillside, 671 Highway 179, Sedona, Arizona 86336. ADOT,

YODER &amp; MCFADE REPORTING SERVICE, INC.

**Response to Comment L43-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

1 February 18, 1999. To whom it may concern: This letter is  
2 in regard to the proposed expansion of Highway 179 to a  
3 four-lane divided highway. I own and operate a successful  
4 art gallery in Hillside. I moved my 31-year-old business to  
5 this location one and a half years ago. What appealed to me  
6 was the scenic beauty of the Sedona landscape along with the  
7 quality of life and people here.

8 Although the plan is designed to ease the flow of  
9 traffic, the plan, as it is currently proposed, will  
10 adversely affect the landscape and the natural attraction  
11 which brings the tourists here in the first place. As I see  
12 it, greater congestion and bottlenecking at the Y will  
13 result from the current plan. I strongly oppose this  
14 expansion plan as it has been presented now. Alternative  
15 plans need to be examined before we cut off our nose to  
16 spite our face. Sincerely, Marty Scherer.

17 L45 MR. EICH: William Eich. I live at 230 East  
18 Ridge Road, Sedona, Arizona 86336. What I'm saying is if  
19 the present curving two-lane road, be it as it is, is very  
20 much a part of the essence of Sedona. When people come in  
21 they drive slow. It's pretty, they look at Cathedral Rock,  
22 they look at Bell Rock and everything else and that's part  
23 of the reason they come here, so we don't want to take away  
24 that which is bringing them. We don't want to throw out the  
25 baby with the bath water as the old expression goes.

Response to Comment L44-1

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section V.L. Visual Resources.

Response to Comment L44-2

The proposed roadway improvements at the "Y" will add one more lane to the existing configuration on each approach. The analysis indicates that the SR 179/SR 89A intersection will operate at level of service (LOS) "C" or better in 2025 with the proposed improvements. The proposed configuration at the "Y" will allow traffic to flow more effectively through this intersection.

18  
 1 By putting in a four-lane highway I think there's  
 L45-1 2 a chance we will destroy a lot of the ethics and we may not  
 3 solve the problem because the people will still drive slow,  
 4 stop, look around and so forth and it will frustrate the guy  
 5 trying to pass him at 60 miles an hour. What they probably  
 6 need, in my opinion, is leave the road the way it is, but do  
 7 some signage, there's nothing there now, if you look at it,  
 8 tell people that one mile ahead is a turnoff because now  
 9 they don't know where to go so they stop, they look, they're  
 10 confused, but they want to get a picture before they're out  
 11 the other end of the tube. So if you sign it to tell them  
 12 and give them several places to pull off, I think that will  
 13 service for the tourists which is the heaviest number of  
 14 cars we have here.

15 The second thing, if they are worried, there is a  
 16 fire station out in the Village now which may have changed  
 17 in the last few years, but there's one there now so they  
 18 don't even worry about fire trucks running back and forth.  
 19 If they want police cars or something, they could probably  
 20 make a wider shoulder, although I proposed seven years ago  
 21 they put a lane down the middle for emergency only. I wrote  
 L45-3 22 a letter to ADOT and that would have solved the emergency  
 23 thing so that the policemen and everybody have their own  
 24 little lane and everybody else could just cruise along  
 25 normally.

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**Response to Comment L45-1**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

**Response to Comment L45-2**

Signage plans will be developed during the final design.

**Response to Comment L45-3**

Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

While not all access problems in Sedona will be solved by the construction of the proposed improvements, the Selected Alternative will reduce congestion and improve traffic operations, in addition to helping improving response times by emergency vehicles.

1 There are a few of the -- there are local 19  
 2 residents who would want to drive as fast as they possibly  
 3 can, but I think a four-lane highway is an overkill for this  
 4 and that's what they're proposing. Secondly, then they're  
 5 going to take away other things beside the pretty drive,  
 6 they're going to take away some of the villas at Hillside  
 7 Shopping Center which is beautiful, some of these very  
 8 quaint buildings are going to be destroyed or torn up so we  
 9 won't even recognize them and just for the sake of having a  
 10 four-lane highway with a concrete wall there, concrete walls  
 11 never look nice.

12 Therefore, that's my comments on it. I know they  
 13 know, but they should remember emergency traffic from the  
 14 Village to Cottonwood can be routed over the next road south  
 15 or something like that. There is another road out there  
 16 that everybody seems to have forgotten. Thank you very  
 17 much.

18 L46 MS. HARDING: Sheila Harding, 30 Cactus Drive. I  
 19 really feel strongly that this is not for a small town like  
 20 Sedona. I think the impact is going to be greater than most  
 21 people believe. I'm very, very upset about the impact on  
 22 the Hillside Market Place. I've been affiliated with --  
 23 well, I shouldn't say that. They've been going through  
 24 improvements in the last couple of years and they did sit  
 25 down with ADOT and discuss the plans, but it was never told

YODER &amp; MCFADE REPORTING SERVICE, INC.

**Response to Comment L45-4**

Business visibility will be maintained unless otherwise determined during final design. No sound barriers are proposed in front of businesses.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

**Response to Comment L45-5**

In the SR 179 Corridor Study, completed in December 1992, various solutions to the existing and forecasted traffic problems on SR 179 were suggested by ADOT, the public, and affected agencies. Ten corridors, including the existing corridor, were identified. The corridors were evaluated on the basis of several criteria including traffic utilization, scenic sensitivity, compatibility with local land use and development plans, and the number of businesses and homes affected. The existing corridor was selected on the basis of environmental considerations, implementation costs, human and service impacts, and input from the public and affected agencies. Refer to Section II. Alternatives Considered of the FEA for a discussion of alternatives considered.

Red Rock Crossing is not part of the State Highway System. The 1997 Sedona Origin-Destination Study indicated that as much as 40 to 50 percent of the traffic on SR 179 is tourist/recreation-related, with the majority of trips destined for the Uptown Sedona area. Trip patterns noted along SR 179 were primarily between Uptown Sedona, the Village of Oak Creek, and SR 179 south. Yavapai County has evaluated alternative routes (Red Rock Crossing) from SR 179 to West Sedona, but the County is no longer considering these routes.

The proposed roadway improvements are designed to reduce congestion and increase the operational efficiency of SR 179 based on the projected average daily traffic volumes. The project traffic volumes consider population and potential build-out of the

**Response to Comment L45-5 (Continued)**

surrounding land uses. The Sedona area will continue to attract visitors from all over the world, regardless of the traffic conditions on SR 179. Also, population growth will continue to increase the traffic in Sedona. The *Sedona Community Plan* (1998) indicates an average annual population growth rate of 2.6 percent between 1997 and 2010. The increased capacity proposed meets the projected need.

SR 89A is currently being widened by ADOT to a 4-lane divided highway between Sedona and Cottonwood.

According to the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices, interstate traffic interchange signs can depict two destination names. One supplemental sign that may list one or two destinations is also allowed. The sign at the SR 260/I-17 traffic interchange identifies Cottonwood and Payson with three destinations on the supplemental sign (Jerome, Clarkdale, and Tuzigoot National Monument). Requests to add Camp Verde, Camp Verde State Park, and Dead Horse Ranch State Park to the signs have been denied. In addition, mileage to Sedona via SR 260 and SR 89A is greater than the route from I-17 to Sedona via SR 179. ADOT is required to sign the quickest, most direct route, and in this case, SR 179 would be the most direct route.

1 to them that their expansion was going to be partially  
 2 eliminated by this four-lane highway.

3 I'm very against retaining walls anywhere in the  
 L46-2 4 city and I think that four-lane highways, et cetera, don't  
 5 belong in a little two-lane mountain town. Highway I-17  
 6 parallels the whole city if they want that much traffic. I  
 7 just think it will really change the flavor of Sedona.

8 The last thing is I don't know how they're going  
 9 to funnel four lanes of traffic into two at certain areas  
 10 such as up town or certain places like in the Village.

L46-3 11 You've got four lanes of traffic full and then they're going  
 12 to have to funnel into two lanes. That along with the new  
 13 signal up town is going to create a lot of grid lock for the  
 14 locals. I am really against it.

L47 MS. HARBISON: Colleen Harbison, P.O. Box 4032,  
 15 Sedona, Arizona 86340. I feel that some of the improvements  
 16 through the Village that they're proposing are wonderful. I  
 17 feel that -- we've been here 15 years. There are tourists  
 18 who stop in the middle of the road, so these little outlook  
 19 places are nice, but when you come closer to Sedona,  
 20 starting with Circle K and around up to Tlaquepaque, the  
 21 businesses there are going to be so adversely affected by  
 22 the aesthetics, there's no need for that. Deceleration  
 L47-1 23 lanes would serve the same purpose. I'm a gardener. I  
 24 garden. I do commercial properties along there, my job is  
 25

**Response to Comment L46-1**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

**Response to Comment L46-2**

Retaining walls have been included to minimize disturbance to the landforms and vegetation. If the retaining walls are eliminated, the heights of the cut and fill slopes will be substantially increased, the embankments will encroach into Oak Creek, and the amount of riparian vegetation and wetlands associated with Jacks Canyon Wash disturbed will also be substantially increased. The aesthetic treatment of the retaining walls and sound barriers will be designed to blend with the natural surrounds. Refer to Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA for the mitigation measure addressing the issue of aesthetics of these types of features.

The proposed roadway improvements are designed to reduce congestion and increase the operational efficiency of SR 179 based on the projected average daily traffic volumes. The project traffic volumes consider population and potential build-out of the surrounding land uses. The Sedona area will continue to attract visitors from all over the world, regardless of the traffic conditions on SR 179. Also, population growth will continue to increase the traffic in Sedona. The Sedona Community Plan (1998) indicates an average annual population growth rate of 2.6 percent between 1997 and 2010. The increased capacity proposed meets the projected need.

**Response to Comment L46-2 (Continued)**

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was evaluated. ADOT has established level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal level of service for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location. ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

ADOT's interest in addressing the traffic congestion on SR 179 goes beyond the issue of delay to the highway users. The following guidelines and factors were considered in the analysis:

- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
- Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.

**Response to Comment L46-2 (Continued)**

- Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane/5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

**Response to Comment L46-3**

The proposed roadway improvements at the "Y" will add one more lane to the existing configuration on each approach. The analysis indicates that the SR 179/SR 89A intersection will operate at LOS "C" or better in 2025 with the proposed improvements. The proposed configuration at the "Y" will allow traffic to flow more effectively through this intersection.

Because traffic volumes along the SR 179 corridor are expected to increase between 36 percent and 93 percent over the next 20-plus years, ADOT has undertaken this project to increase the capacity and improve the traffic operation of the route. ADOT has determined that the ultimate facility should provide four through lanes for the entire segment of SR 179 to meet the transportation needs of the public. The proposed improvements would satisfy current highway design guidelines and should meet the planning objectives of the Coconino National Forest, Yavapai and Coconino counties, the City of Sedona, and the Village of Oak Creek.

**Response to Comment L47-1**

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps

**Response to Comment L47-1 (Continued)**

are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified that reduce visual impacts to the setting. They are listed in the FEA at the beginning of the document as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty; Flags, Kites & Fun; the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.

Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with SR 179.

Right-hand deceleration and acceleration lanes are not required because of the 4-lane and 5-lane roadway configuration, which allows one additional through lane in each direction. Left-turn deceleration lanes are provided in most cases to allow slowing vehicles to be removed from through traffic. Providing deceleration and acceleration lanes with the 4-lane and 5-lane roadway configuration would increase the disturbed area greater than is required to solve the traffic congestion problem.

1 going to be gone. It's not funny. That's all I want to  
 2 say.  
 3 L48 MR. URBAN: Steve Urban, U-R-B-A-N. Number 41  
 4 Windsong Drive, Sedona, Arizona 86339. My comment is as the  
 5 maintenance facilitator of Hillside, have been for several  
 6 years, and if you take 41 parking spaces out of hillside You  
 7 may as well shut it down, that that will effectively close  
 8 the Hillside. Our parking situation is desperate and that's  
 9 unreasonable. That's about all I've got to say.

L49 MR. MITTELMAN: My name is Irwin Mittelman,  
 M-I-T-E-L-M-A-N. My wife and I own the Outpost on 179 and  
 I've been following the plans and trying to make input where  
 we can speak at the meeting. We are not opposed to  
 necessary improvements for health and safety, but since we  
 also get the views of all the visitors coming up that make  
 us in effect a form of a reception center for visitors, we  
 hear that they are opposed at the thought of getting a  
 four-lane divided road coming up instead of a nice rural  
 feeling to enjoy the scenic view, so that's for the  
 visitors.

L49-1 From our perspective, you know, you have a left  
 turn lane in front, that's fine. I'm thinking of the entire  
 impact on the community and I feel that the City's standards  
 that are used, the metropolitan area standards that are used  
 are inappropriate for this region, this area, specifically

L49-2

**Response to Comment L48-1**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

**Response to Comment L49-1**  
Comment will noted noted in the Project Record.**Response to Comment L49-2**

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was evaluated. ADOT has established level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal level of service for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location. ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in 2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

**Response to Comment L49-2 (Continued)**

ADOT's interest in addressing the traffic congestion on SR 179 goes beyond the issue of delay to the highway users. The following guidelines and factors were considered in the analysis:

- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
- Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.
- Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane/5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

22  
 1 Sedona. If people have to slow up to come in town and be  
 2 bumper to bumper for a few days, that is a small factor.  
 3 The important things are left turn lanes and a  
 4 few scenic pullouts, that's a high priority. The safety of  
 L49-3 5 removing the most dangerous icy spots, those are the  
 6 priorities. I think ADOT needs to give more careful  
 7 consideration to the impact on some of the other  
 8 properties. I'm not speaking of ours because it does not  
 9 look from the preliminary plans that we are adversely  
 10 affected, but people have gone to great lengths to beautify  
 L49-4 11 the city and the improvements look like they will severely  
 12 reverse that effect.

13 I respect ADOT's work and presentation, but I  
 14 hope that they have one-on-one meetings with the people who  
 L49-5 15 will be affected before any further design decisions are  
 16 made. Thank you.

17 L50 MR. FEGA: Ken Fega, F-E-G-A. I just wanted to  
 18 say the same thing as my letter. I have two restaurants in  
 19 the Hillside Property, Hillside Courtyard there on 179 and  
 20 proposing to take 41 parking spaces away from us would  
 L50-1 21 impact to a point where I don't think we'd be able to stay  
 22 open. We have a problem already with lack of parking at the  
 23 place because we're so busy and I think doing what they're  
 24 going to do would just put the restaurants out of business  
 L50-2 25 and there will be some kind of class action suit by everyone

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The public participation summarized in the Draft Environmental Assessment dated January 1999 described what had occurred up to that point in time. Comments from the City of Sedona and Chamber of Commerce were made after the February 1999 public

**Response to Comment L49-5 (Continued)**

hearing and therefore could not have been included in the Draft Environmental Assessment. Refer to Section VI. B. Public Involvement of the FEA for the current description of the public participation process associated with the study.

**Response to Comment L50-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

23  
 1 in that complex who have the same problem.  
 2 I'm totally against what they're doing. We do a  
 3 lot of business there, been there for eight years, built up  
 4 a good business and they're about to shut us down by doing  
 5 this. Thanks.

6 L51 MR. RICHMAN: My name is Parland Richman. I'm  
 7 the owner of Hillside Courtyard and Hozho and I'm just  
 8 wondering why they're going to take 41 parking places from  
 9 me all at Hillside when I only have 150 places. They  
 10 promised us two years ago when we met with ADOT that we  
 11 would not be affected at all and now they're going to be  
 12 taking 41 places of parking and put me out of business.  
 13 Between the tenants and the employees of the two  
 14 restaurants, we use about 70 parking places which leaves us  
 15 about 80 and now they want to take 41. That's my question.

16 L52 MR. DEMARAY: My name is Russell Demaray,  
 17 D-E-M-A-R-A-Y. I live at 665 Panorama Boulevard in Sedona.  
 18 I'm totally against the expansion of 179 for several  
 19 reasons. First of all, the road goes absolutely nowhere,  
 20 except to Sedona. There's no provision to handle more  
 21 traffic when it gets into Sedona and the road, all it does  
 22 is create another four-lane divided super highway into a  
 23 town that's already overcrowded with tourism.  
 24 We have one major exit into Sedona off of the  
 25 Cottonwood exit which is not identified by ADOT. If they'd

**Response to Comment L51-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

**Response to Comment L52-1**

The proposed roadway improvements at the "Y" will add one more lane to the existing configuration on each approach. The analysis indicates that the SR 179/SR 89A intersection will operate at level of service (LOS) "C" or better in 2025 with the proposed improvements. The proposed configuration at the "Y" will allow traffic to flow more effectively through this intersection.

Traffic conditions on SR 179 at the approach to the SR 89A "Y" traffic signal are also a serious concern of ADOT. The signals in the Uptown area may be causing some queuing of traffic onto SR 179. This will be further studied during final design.

In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Based on historic population statistics, ADOT anticipates that this projected traffic growth will occur with or without the proposed roadway improvements. This is in large part due to the unique attraction and scenic beauty of Sedona and Oak Creek Canyon—this area will continue to attract visitors from all over the world, regardless of traffic conditions on SR 179. Also, population growth will continue to contribute to the growth of traffic in Sedona—the Sedona Community Plan indicates an average annual population growth rate of 2.6 percent between 1997 and 2010.

**Response to Comment L52-2**

SR 179 is the primary access route from the Phoenix metropolitan area to Sedona and to the recreation areas associated with Oak Creek Canyon and the red rock formations. SR 179 currently serves as the primary access to the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest and is considered an entry corridor to the National Forest lands. The State of Arizona Parkways, Historic, and Scenic Roads Advisory Committee designate much of SR 179 within the project limits as the Red Rock Scenic Road. The project is in a uniquely scenic area of the state and attracts local, national, and international visitors. The route traverses through the Red Rock country and provides spectacular panoramic views of eroded monuments, promontories, cliffs, and buttes.

According to the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices, interstate traffic interchange signs can depict two destination names. One sign that may list one or two destinations is also allowed. The sign at the SR 260/I-17 traffic interchange identifies Cottonwood and Payson with three destinations on the supplemental sign (Jerome, Clarkdale, and Tuzigoot National Monument). Requests to add Camp Verde, Camp Verde State Park, and Dead Horse Ranch State Park to the signs have been denied. In addition, mileage to Sedona via SR 260 and SR 89A is greater than that of the route from I-17 to Sedona via SR 179. ADOT is required to sign the quickest, most direct route, and in this case, SR 179 would be the most direct route.

<sup>24</sup>  
 identify this exit as a destination to Sedona, they would have the traffic on 179 as it exists today so that they wouldn't be able to justify dividing this road and creating this super divided highway and destroying a hundred acres of forest service, pristine property in the state of Arizona.

The cost to build this road that ADOT<sup>'</sup> is giving is way below what it's going to cost when they destroy the major shopping district off of 179 including Hillside, Hozho and Tlaquepaque, plus the ambience of the town. That's it.  
 MR. SIEVERT: Ron Sievert, S-I-E-V-E-R-T. I'm in favor of the Ranger Road plan proposed by the City of Sedona because it's appropriate. I favor it because the existing plan does not deviate the traffic problem as the Ranger Road plan would and the Ranger Road plan does not have existing businesses, therefore it does not diminish the existing tax base. Thank you very much.

MR. THOMPSON: My name is Steve Thompson. I'm here on behalf of the owners of a building at Milepost 312.9. It's referred to in the draft environmental assessment as the Sunterra Building. Right now the exposure is detrimental to the building and we object to the current Alternative C, in that the right-of-way that obstructs or will impact the structure at Milepost 312.9 can be minimized through a number of features.

One of which would be to change the lane from a

**Response to Comment L52-3**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

**Response to Comment L53-1**

Ranger Road is not part of the State Highway System and is owned and maintained by the City of Sedona. Therefore, ADOT cannot include it in the project design concept.

**Response to Comment L54-1**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts,

1 four lane with a raised median to a five-lane urban as  
 2 outlined in the plan. Another would be to minimize the  
 3 slope by utilizing retaining walls. The current draft as it  
 4 is would impact the structure greatly. This is the largest  
 5 gallery currently in Sedona and after they are done with  
 6 their current project will be the largest gallery in the  
 7 state of Arizona in terms of size and volume and this will  
 8 impact a number of people in that there are over 60 artists  
 9 who currently display and sell their work in this gallery  
 10 and that the sales won't necessarily decrease.

11 There are a number of unique properties in there  
 12 and there are no other areas on Gallery Row, so to speak,  
 L54-1 13 that will house a 10,000 foot gallery and this would  
 14 significantly impact the tax base in Sedona as well as the  
 15 tourism rate here which the draft environmental assessment  
 16 indicates the primary reasons visitors come to the Sedona  
 17 Oak Creek area are to view and experience the scenic beauty  
 18 of the area and shop at the art galleries and local craft  
 19 stores.

20 The current draft would take anywhere between a  
 21 third to the entire building and that is unacceptable. We  
 22 object to that in that one of the main reasons people come  
 23 to Sedona are for the art galleries and this would  
 24 effectively put the largest art gallery out of business, and  
 25 so far that reason we object. We've met with engineers who

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#### **Response to Comment L54-1 (Continued)**

reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section IV. L. Visual Resources.

again have indicated that the current plan and the current  
 impacts upon the structure can be mitigated through the  
 various methods including the use of retaining walls and  
 decreasing the slope and getting rid of the raised median  
 and the changing of the curve that's up above Hillside.

Typically with the proposal we've heard the  
 engineers will not only favorably impact and affect the  
 structure, but it would also favorably impact the Hillside  
 Gallery and Shops which also stand to lose a significant  
 number of parking spaces as to the current plan. We object  
 based upon those factors.

L55 MS. YARLIMEK: Deb Yarlimek, Y-A-R-L-I-M-E-K.

I'm totally against the whole thing. I moved here not long  
 ago, a year and a half ago, knowing full well that traffic  
 is slow on 179, but it's beautiful. I drive it every day.  
 I love it. I enjoy it every day I drive it. There's hardly  
 ever been really -- I've only been in one holdup, one timely  
 holdup. It's part of the community. It's part of the way  
 Sedona is. It's part of the beauty. It's part of the small  
 town, plus my job is at Javelina Cantina, my livelihood.

I work there and they plan on taking out half the  
 parking lot. There will be no place for me to -- there will  
 be no place for people to park. If they can't park, they  
 can't eat. If they don't eat, I don't have a job. I'm  
 against the whole thing. Thank you.

#### **Response to Comment L55-1**

SR 179 is the primary access route from the Phoenix metropolitan area to Sedona. The highway is classified as a Rural Minor Arterial from I-17 (MP 299.0) to the Sedona city limits (MP 308.2) and as an Urban Principal Arterial from the city limits to the intersection with SR 89A (MP 313.4). As part of the State Highway System and as an Urban Principal Arterial, the route must continue to satisfy the public demand for movement of commercial, regional, and local traffic. As such, the roadway cannot be compared to a National Park roadway which focuses on the circulation of destination traffic rather than efficient movement of commercial, regional, and local traffic. As part of the State Highway System and as a Principal Arterial, the route must continue to satisfy the public demand for high mobility. The speed limit will not change when the proposed improvements are constructed. The various alternative routes informally proposed are not part of the State Highway System. Therefore, ADOT cannot include them in the project design concept.

#### **Response to Comment L55-2**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

1 L56 MR. LORPARCO: Vincent Lorporaco, Jr. what I'd  
 2 like to make a case against and state that I don't agree  
 3 with are the alignments at what is referred to on the draft  
 4 environmental assessment, January '99, Page 30, the  
 5 referenced property is referred to as Sunterra at Milepost  
 6 312.9 which I'm representing my client Marty and Diane  
 7 Herman of Exposures International Gallery. I'm going to  
 8 work with them in remodeling this building for like the  
 9 largest gallery in Arizona, art gallery, fine art.  
 10 I would like some thought given to how we can  
 11 align the right-of-way so it doesn't impact this building  
 L56-1 12 and the Hillside Gallery and move the right-of-way towards  
 13 Oak Creek and pretty much put all the onus on the bed and  
 14 breakfast across the street to the west, so I'd like some  
 15 consideration done with smoothing the curve and moving it  
 16 towards the creek. That's pretty much it.

17 L57 MR. HERMAN: Marty Herman, owner of Exposures  
 18 Gallery, owner of what is called the Sunterra Building at  
 19 Milepost 312.9. This proposed road as indicated today will  
 20 decimate our gallery. We are tax contributors for Sedona  
 21 sales tax greater than one percent of the entire Sedona  
 22 tax. We talked with some ADOT people today and suggested  
 23 that they move the road in front of our building more toward  
 24 the bed and breakfast across the highway at the same  
 25 milepost.

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#### **Response to Comment L56-1**

The proposed roadway section and alignment have been designed to minimize impacts to property, residences, and businesses. Approximately 10.6 acres of private land, a total of 12 parking spaces from eight businesses (west side of SR 179 near MP 313.3 at the "Y"), and four commercial building structures (including the canopy structure at the Service Station) will be affected by the proposed improvements. This is out of the approximately 36 single standing businesses and four multiple business centers. Refer to Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations in the Final Environmental Assessment for additional information on the economic impacts.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty, Flags, Kites & Fun, the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.

The Inn on Oak Creek will be relocated according to the Selected Alternative, eliminating any concern related to access. ADOT will continue to meet and work with the City of Sedona through final design.

#### **Response to Comment L57-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts.

ADOT has reduced the width of the travel lanes and median widths within the city of Sedona to minimize the amount of right-of-way required and the impact to private properties. Within the Coconino National Forest, guardrails will be installed to allow for steeper fill slopes to reduce the roadway footprint and to preserve vegetation.

That bed and breakfast is up for sale at the moment and that moving of the highway toward the creek would mitigate the impact on the Sunterra Building which is slated to become Exposures Gallery building this October which will be the largest gallery in Arizona at that time. This 10,000 square foot building as a project which will be spent by October of '99 greater than \$1.5 million and has attracted fine art to Sedona in a way that hasn't been done in many years and is now known as the fine art center in Sedona and by October will be a real profile of fine art throughout the state and the southwest.

We have over a dozen employees and over 60 artists that are affected and impacted by this building being impacted. Thank you.

MR. EIS: My name is Robert Eis, E-I-S. My residence is here in Oak Creek. I'm against the project. I feel that they are not looking at some of the economic factors involved in the area of Hillside when you're taking away 50 some parking spots. That's going to ruin that shopping center down there. They have a parking problem already.

I feel they're trying to build a freeway to a dead end. I feel that they should find an alternative route, Red Rock might be one. If they're going to do anything to this highway, what they should do is resurface

**Response to Comment L58-1**

Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) describes the economic impact that the proposed project will have on the community. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

**Response to Comment L58-2**

In the SR 179 Corridor Study, completed in December 1992, various solutions to the existing and forecasted traffic problems on SR 179 were suggested by ADOT, the public, and affected agencies. Ten corridors, including the existing corridor, were identified. The corridors were evaluated on the basis of several criteria including traffic utilization, scenic sensitivity, compatibility with local land use and development plans, and the number of businesses and homes affected. The existing corridor was selected on the basis of environmental considerations, implementation costs, human and service impacts, and input from the public and affected agencies. Refer to Section II. Alternatives Considered of the FEA for a discussion of alternatives considered.

Red Rock Crossing is not part of the State Highway System. The 1997 Sedona Origin-Destination Study indicated that as much as 40 to 50 percent of the traffic on SR 179 is tourist/recreation-related, with the majority of trips destined for the Uptown Sedona area. Trip patterns noted along SR 179 were primarily between Uptown Sedona, the Village of Oak Creek and SR 179 south. Yavapai County has evaluated alternative routes (Red Rock Crossing) from SR 179 to West Sedona, but the County is no longer considering these routes.

29  
 it, make turning lanes. They don't need to do all this four  
 1 lane business and make a super highway. That's all I have  
 2 to say. Thank you.

3                   L59 MS. KANE: My name is Ruth Kane, K-A-N-E. I live  
 4 at the Village of Oak Creek. First of all, I'd like to know  
 5 if the 29 million includes the right-of-way cost or if that  
 6 is an additional cost. Secondly, I would like to know what  
 7 the scheduling, proposed scheduling is on each phase of this  
 8 road construction, and thirdly, I'd like to submit, when I  
 9 turn this in, is a proposed sign for preceding each pullout  
 10 that says no stopping except at designated pullouts, next  
 11 pullout, however many miles it is to the next pullout  
 12 because if you don't do that, then you're putting extra  
 13 lanes in for no good reason because they're still going to  
 14 be pulling off on the edge of the road all the time. Thank  
 15 you.

16                   L60 MS. BUSHA: Gail Busha, B-U-S-H-A. We've lived  
 17 here 17 years and we do not object to 179 the way it is. If  
 18 they put more highway in, we're going to have more traffic.  
 19 We wish they'd plow it up and put the old dirt road in and  
 20 everyone would be safer. It would be less traffic and  
 21 slower traffic and this is insane what they're planning.

22                   L61 MR. ISLAS: Amador Islas, I-S-L-A-S. The  
 23 proposed plan seems to be a pretty good plan in my eyes.  
 24                   L61-1 The only concern that I have at this time is the parking

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**Response to Comment L59-1**

The current estimated cost of the Selected Alternative is \$50 million in 2002 dollars and it does include right-of-way costs.

**Response to Comment L59-2**

ADOT's current Five-Year Highway Construction Program includes the design and construction of two segments of SR 179, the Village of Oak Creek to the North Forest Boundary and the North Forest Boundary to Sedona. ADOT will meet with the City of Sedona and other stakeholders to discuss the progressive implementation of the Selected Alternative once the Design Concept Report and Environmental Assessment have been completed. Because of the complexity of the Sedona segment, the Village of Oak Creek segment will therefore most likely be constructed first.

**Response to Comment L59-3**

ADOT will be installing "No Parking" signs along the highway; however, other signage will direct motorists to the new scenic pull-outs that will be provided.

**Response to Comment L60-1**

Traffic on SR 179 between the Village of Oak Creek and the "Y" at SR 89A in Sedona has grown to a level where the traveling public frequently experiences substantial slowing and stop-and-go conditions between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A. The traffic volume growth has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on SR 179. In 1997, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume near MP 308, in the Coconino National Forest one mile north of the Village of Oak Creek, was 11,300 vehicles per day. In 2001 the ADT at this location was 13,403 vehicles per day—an 18 percent increase.

The maximum traffic volume that can be sustained on a 2-lane highway such as SR 179 without incurring significant and consistent delays and congestion was evaluated. ADOT has established level of service (LOS) "C" for average peak-hour traffic as the goal level of service for SR 179. This level of service provides a balance between traffic service (with some intermittent interruptions and delay) and economic investment. At LOS C, the 2-lane portions of SR 179 can serve up to 10,900 vehicles per day. SR 179 exceeds this threshold now, depending on location. ADT volumes of 13,000 to 21,000 vehicles per day were recorded in

**Response to Comment L60-1 (Continued)**

2001 between the Village of Oak Creek and SR 89A in Sedona. By 2025, the forecast ADT of 21,753 vehicles per day near MP 308 would operate at LOS E in the peak-hour if no improvements are made. Keeping the road smaller would not keep the traffic at bay, but would contribute to substantial delays and congestion to the roadway. Shoulders and clear zones are needed for the total roadway structure to increase safety area.

ADOT's interest in addressing the traffic congestion on SR 179 goes beyond the issue of delay to the highway users. The following guidelines and factors were considered in the analysis:

- SR 179 is the only means of access to Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek for many residents and business users who are located south of the "Y" at SR 89A. Since there are no routes that parallel SR 179 in Sedona, basic services such as fire fighting, emergency medical, and police safety services may be adversely impacted by congested traffic.
- Vehicle accidents and the resultant effects will continue to increase as congestion increases. The accident data for SR 179 verify this. Traffic safety issues will continue to grow if ADOT does nothing to address the traffic congestion.
- Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. This could result in some impacts to existing businesses along SR 179, as some travelers may choose to stop at other commercial locations that have more convenient access and egress.

ADOT has developed the 4-lane/5-lane concept for SR 179 (Alternative C) as the Selected Alternative because it addresses all of the issues noted above. In addition, ADOT has worked diligently with and will continue to work with the City of Sedona, the Coconino National Forest, and others to ensure that the proposed improvements to SR 179 have the least impact possible on the environment, retaining the qualities of a scenic road while still meeting the needs of the traveling public.

1 spaces that are going to taken by the widening of the road.  
 2 It's going to also cut down on the amount of tourists that  
 3 walk and go from shops to shops. By taking up the parking  
 L61-1 4 spaces and widening the road will not allow a lot of these  
 5 shops to stay open due to the fact that the road will be too  
 6 close to them and will not allow any traffic to go to the  
 7 shops. Thank you.  
 8 L62 MS. PUCKETT: Donna Puckett, P-U-C-K-E-T-T. Two  
 9 concerns. One is handling emergency transportation between  
 L62-1 10 the Village and West Sedona during the construction period  
 11 and the fact that it doesn't seem that they're considering  
 12 any alternate routes for emergency vehicles. Second is  
 13 entering and exiting the Village toward I-17. I see one  
 14 section of the proposal around Rojo Drive. The speed limit  
 15 is currently 50 miles an hour, traveling is generally going  
 16 faster than that speed limit and there have been two broad  
 L62-2 17 side collisions recently within the last six months.  
 18 They need to strongly consider even speed  
 19 reduction before entering that section of the C1 proposal or  
 20 a traffic control signal at where Rojo Wildhorse Basin Drive  
 21 intersects with Highway 179.  
 22 L63 MS. JUSTGARTEN: Annette Lustgarten,  
 23 L-U-S-T-G-A-R-T-E-N. They said that they could provide a  
 L63-1 24 scale drawing of the actual right-of-way depth from Chapel  
 25 Road to Meadowlark. My address is 100 Ross Road, Sedona

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**Response to Comment L61-1**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

**Response to Comment L62-1**

Emergency access will be provided during construction. The contractor shall adhere to the Arizona Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, which provides rules for the maintenance of emergency services.

**Response to Comment L62-2**

The proposed roadway will use the same posted speed limits that currently exist. Refer to Section II. E. Build Alternatives Considered of the Final Environmental Assessment.

Dropping the speed to 25 mph would not provide better access because it would not alleviate the traffic congestion. Access to and egress from businesses, side roads, and residential driveways along SR 179 will become more and more difficult as congestion increases. Lowering the posted speed limit would also have safety implications because it would require traffic to move at a speed less than currently posted and create conditions that would frustrate the increasing number of drivers. As part of the State Highway System and as a Principal Arterial, the route must continue to satisfy the public demand for high mobility. Sharper horizontal and vertical curves would increase the accident rates because motorists would not have adequate sight distances as they pulled out from the businesses.

**Response to Comment L63-1**

Existing right-of-way information can be obtained from Coconino County or the City of Sedona. The right-of-way limits on the preliminary plans were provided by ADOT and may not be the most current. The final right-of-way acquisition determination will be made during the Final Design process.

1       86336. That's my business comment. Let me give you my  
 2 personal comment. I think it's a total overkill. I think  
 3 there are easier ways to accomplish traffic circulation and  
 4 this is going to totally ruin Sedona and the Village of Oak  
 5 Creek area. That's my personal comments.

6       L64   MR. HASHISH: Fahmi, F-A-H-M-I, Hashish,  
 7 H-A-S-H-I-S-H. I live here east of the highway from the  
 8 Sedona golf course. I have five acres. I will just show  
 9 you one thing. I came here the last ten years to every  
 10 meeting. I was looking through the file, I was rushing, and  
 11 I found one of them from 1992. I don't know how long the  
 12 community has been waiting. Are they waiting for all the  
 13 residents to be one opinion? That's not good method,  
 14 there's no way. This person has own opinion.

15      They pay so every study of these maybe four or  
 16 five times change. I was here on Highway 179 in 1979 when I  
 17 bought my property, 2,000, 2,500 car pass every 24 hours.  
 18 Today, not counting weekends which is very high, about  
 19 10,000 to 12,000 cars pass and they still keep going. Many  
 20 of the people I know passed away in ten years, many, many  
 21 people young like you, they came, each person have different  
 22 opinion, this is ten years. How much longer are they going  
 L64-1 23 to go, what are they waiting for? I spoke many times in  
 24 this meeting. Thank you very much.

25       L65   MS. SERULNIC: Dorothy Serulnic,

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#### **Response to Comment L63-2**

In the SR 179 Corridor Study, completed in December 1992, various solutions to the existing and forecasted traffic problems on SR 179 were suggested by ADOT, the public, and affected agencies. Ten corridors, including the existing corridor, were identified. The corridors were evaluated on the basis of several criteria including traffic utilization, scenic sensitivity, compatibility with local land use and development plans, and the number of businesses and homes affected. The existing corridor was selected on the basis of environmental considerations, implementation costs, human and service impacts, and input from the public and affected agencies. Refer to Section II. Alternatives Considered of the Final Environmental Assessment for a discussion of alternatives considered.

#### **Response to Comment L64-1**

ADOT has been working closely with various jurisdictional agencies to create a plan that will best serve the traveling public and minimize adverse impacts on the environment. The planning process has taken this long in order to complete all the surveys, analyses, and evaluations needed and to respond to input from the agencies involved as well as to the community.

32 S-E-R-U-L-N-I-C. I'm building a ranch that's in one of the  
 1 original subdivisions in the area. It's quite a place.  
 2 It's especially overlooked on the traffic plan. My concern  
 3 is that going south after you pass two lights in the Village  
 4 of Oak Creek, the tendency is to start speeding up. Now the  
 5 speeding doesn't really start until you go to the new golf  
 6 course, the golf resort because people will stop to look and  
 7 then when they pass the golf resort they start speeding.  
 8 Number two, there's a church right at Red Rock  
 9 and it's going to be difficult to cross four lanes of  
 10 traffic after the cars have now accelerated to the point  
 11 which they do right after the golf course. We need  
 12 something to stop the flow of traffic at that point. It  
 13 could be a single light, signal light that only activates  
 L65-1 14 when a car is waiting to cross rather than one that's there  
 15 all the time. That would be my suggestion, when a car pulls  
 16 up, have the signal light then slow up to let us go in the  
 17 lane because that's my concern.

18 L66 MS. SHUGRUE: Diane Shugrue, S-H-U-G-R-U-E. I'm  
 19 totally against this widening especially from Circle K on  
 20 because I'm one of the owners of one of the Hillside shops,  
 21 actually one of the restaurants and if they do take those 40  
 22 spaces away from us, then City limits has a certain amount  
 L66-1 23 of spaces required to function and to open and we will have  
 24 a problem there. I find that all of Hillside, it brings in  
 25

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**Response to Comment L65-1**

The need to install traffic signals will be further evaluated during final design. Currently the intersection at Chapel Road and SR 179 is the only new intersection that warrants signalization. As other intersections meet the warrant criteria, signals will be considered.

**Response to Comment L66-1**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

Because Hillside will not lose any parking spaces, the text related to the number of parking spaces at that location has been eliminated from the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA).

The proposed roadway section and alignment have been designed to minimize impacts to property, residences, and businesses. Approximately 10.6 acres of private land, a total of 12 parking spaces from eight businesses (west side of SR 179 near MP 313.3 at the "Y"), and four commercial building structures (including the canopy structure at the Chevron Service Station) will be affected by the proposed improvements. These are out of the approximately 36 single-standing businesses and four multiple business centers. Refer to Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations in the FEA for additional information on the economic impacts.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty; Flags, Kites & Fun; the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.



Response to Comment L69-1

A noise analysis has been prepared that considers changes in noise levels created by the proposed roadway improvements. Noise abatement measures have been recommended and their final location will be determined during final design. At that time, ADOT will meet with each property owner whose site meets the criteria for abatement established by ADOT's Noise Abatement Policy. Each owner's input will be considered regarding sound wall construction. Noise barriers will be considered only if a majority of the residents benefited by a barrier are in favor of its construction. Refer to Section IV. G. Noise of the Final Environmental Assessment for the discussion of the consequences of the proposed improvements on projected noise levels within the project limits.

Response to Comment L70-1

The roadway improvements will reconstruct the entire highway, which will correct the dips in the road and reduce the tendency for the water to pond on the surface of SR 179. Refer to Section IV. M. Drainage and Floodplain Considerations of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA).

1 landscape medians and limited access. Number four, we  
2 really like the plans for grading future walkways along  
3 179. Number five, we feel that these plans will help us to  
4 maintain our rural atmosphere at the Village of Oak Creek.

5 L68-1 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Robin Cunningham. I live on the  
6 corner of Rojo Drive off of 179, and have a little under an  
7 acre of property there. I'm concerned with the widening of  
8 the road infringing on our buffer zone and I would like to  
9 see a privacy wall built if a four-lane highway is  
10 constructed. I don't like the fact that if there is no  
11 buffer zone or privacy wall that my property is totally  
12 exposed to traffic and the noise. It would cut down a lot  
13 of the noise. I think that's it.

14 L70 MR. BAXTER: I'm Al Baxter, B-A-X-T-E-R. I live  
15 just north of Back-O'Beyond Road off of Highway 179. I've  
16 been here for 20 years and I like all the improvements that  
17 have been made. The extra buildings and so forth. When  
18 they made an improvement they took the highway down too low  
19 so when they do put the four lanes in, they should correct  
20 how it dips down and fills up with water and so forth and  
21 then, of course, between the two churches on 179 it's a  
22 beautiful curve and they're going to straighten that curve  
23 out and drop it down between those retaining walls.

24 They'll spend thousands of dollars needlessly by  
25 digging it down instead of just widening it and then the

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35  
 1 natural beauty and then, of course, I think they really  
 2 should provide sound barrier walls for any problem on the  
 3 highway. They have provided for some places, but not like  
 4 our house and other places. They need a sound barrier  
 5 because of the increased speed and increased traffic.

6 L71 MS. DIKES: This is from Angela Bertorelli, owner  
 7 of Quality Inn, P.O. Box 180, Sedona, Arizona 86336,  
 8 February 16, 1999. To Arizona Department of Arizona, reason  
 9 the widening of Highway 179. I do not favor the proposed  
 10 plan for widening Highway 179. As a business on 179, I am  
 11 not impacted, but I feel it is ridiculous how you have  
 12 impacted Hillside that is next door. Hillside is a major  
 13 attraction in Sedona and it hosts two of the best  
 14 restaurants and has the highest quality of shops in Northern  
 15 Arizona. To take away any parking would be devastating.

16 When they host their special events in the  
 17 community, i.e., concerts, art walks, fashion shows I lend  
 18 them parking from the Comfort Inn and King's Ransom to  
 19 handle the overflow of people in attendance. I know that  
 20 prior Sunterra property also gave them their parking lot  
 21 during special events. With your present plan you will have  
 22 to condemn Hillside in its entirety.

23 In addition, I think an alternative route is the  
 24 answer and not a divided super highway ruining the beauty of  
 25 Sedona. Angela Bertorelli, owner.

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**Response to Comment L70-2**

A noise analysis has been prepared that considers changes in noise levels created by the proposed roadway improvements. Noise abatement measures have been recommended and their final location will be determined during final design. At that time, ADOT will meet with each property owner whose site meets the criteria for abatement established by ADOT's Noise Abatement Policy. Each owner's input will be considered regarding sound wall construction. Noise barriers will be considered only if a majority of the residents benefited by a barrier are in favor of its construction. Refer to Section IV. G. Noise of the FEA for the discussion of the consequences of the proposed improvements on projected noise levels within the project limits.

**Response to Comment L71-1**

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

Response to Comment L72-1

Retaining walls have been included to minimize disturbance to the landforms and vegetation. If the retaining walls are eliminated, the heights of the cut and fill slopes will be substantially increased, the embankments will encroach into Oak Creek, and the amount of riparian vegetation and wetlands associated with Jacks Canyon Wash disturbed will also be substantially increased. The aesthetic treatment of the retaining walls and sound barriers will be designed to blend with the natural surrounds. Refer to Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) for the mitigation measure addressing the issue of aesthetics of these types of features.

Section IV. L. Visual Resources of the FEA describes the visual impact that the proposed project will have on the landscape. While there are virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts, reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize these adverse impacts. Specific mitigation measures have been identified to reduce visual impacts. They are listed at the beginning of the FEA, as well as in Section V. L. Visual Resources.

1 L72 MS. CARSON: Diane Carson, C-A-R-S-O-N. 195  
2 skyline Drive off of 179. I'm very opposed to the widening  
3 from Back-O'Beyond through the Y. The other proposed  
4 section in the road I can live with. I cannot live with  
5 walls and barricades. I came from Detroit. I don't want  
6 any part of them. It will ruin the beauty of Sedona. It  
7 will ruin what all of us came here for and all the future  
8 tourists and people that come to town will be disillusioned  
9 by the effect that it's going to impose upon all of us.  
10 Not only will there be a loss of business, but  
11 there be a loss of people wanting to come in and all the  
12 builders, I think, are going to be affected by it greatly.  
13 People that came for the charm, I think will maybe decide to  
14 move on. It's just going to create a very bad impression  
15 upon entering Sedona and it makes most of us heartsick.  
16 That's it.

17 L73 MS. FRENCH: Priscilla French. I'm a business  
18 owner in Hillside and I think the proposed plan would be  
19 devastating, absolutely devastating. The fact of taking our  
20 40 to 45 parking spaces would be a travesty. Too many  
21 people -- the business has been there for ten years and I  
22 have tremendous local clientele and I heard nothing but  
23 negative comments all week long from ladies that come in my  
24 store, how awful it would be to lose the gorgeous aspect  
25 that Hillside has now.

Response to Comment L73-1

The alignment of the roadway has been designed to minimize property impacts. The existing right-of-way is not wide enough to accommodate the proposed roadway improvements, and it is not possible to shift the roadway to avoid any one property without impacting others.

L73-1      4 16-foot median is a good idea. From what I've been able to  
5 tell, I think if they moved the highway over another three  
6 feet, lose the 16-foot median so that they wouldn't have to  
7 take the parking spaces at Hillside, then maybe that would  
8 be a livable alternative.

The other comment I've heard and I think it's  
also a good idea is to all the way along lose the 16-foot  
median and have turn lanes. I also think that having the  
beauty of Sedona and having it being a small rural town,  
putting the four-lane highway in there, I think will just  
make it look to commercial, people will want to whiz by.  
just think it will lose all the beauty that its got now  
which is sad and totally wrong. Thanks.

L74 MR. YERICH: My name is Steve Yerich,  
Y-E-R-I-C-H. I live at 2860 Highway 179 and on the map here  
it's my house, residence that's the one in the way. I'm  
stuck between a rock and a hard place because it's taking so  
long for the right-of-way. I can't move my house, sell my  
house, anything because it's like just in a bad position.  
No one is going to want to buy it if the highway is going to  
buy it within a year or whatever.

I need to get in contact with somebody. I called

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1 and I've talked with Don Thorman and I've left messages with  
 2 the offices in Phoenix and a lot of people don't return my  
 3 calls. This is really affecting my life and I need to get  
 4 this straightened out. I'm in a position right now where  
 5 I'm ready to deal, so if we can get through this as soon  
 6 as -- if we can get together as soon as possible' we can  
 L74-1 7 come to an agreement and we can move on because the position  
 8 of that property, any route they're going to take is going  
 9 to take that and I need to have someone address these  
 10 problems for me. This is the only forum I can get some  
 11 response. Thank you very much.

L75 MR. LIPPMAN: My name is William Lippman,  
 L-1-P-P-M-A-N. I own the Tlaquepaque which is just over the  
 bridge in Sedona on the 179. I'd like to suggest, A, that  
 we've heard that there's a possibility that you would be  
 taking our mall which was built 25 years ago and this  
 Tlaquepaque is sort of a monument and a major attraction  
 within the city of Sedona, synonymous with Sedona and we  
 have the intention of making it even greater in the future,  
 so consequently any infringement on our property really  
 hampers our future plans.

L75-1 22 Across the street from us at this time on 179 is  
 23 some property that really has nothing on it, especially by  
 24 the street side and would be available. If you have to  
 25 enlarge your right-of-way you could buy that property and

**Response to Comment L74-1**

38 ADOT compensates property owners based on the market value of  
 property acquired for project right-of-way in accordance with the  
 Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition  
 Policies Act, as amended in 1987.

**Response to Comment L75-1**

Alternative C, the Selected Alternative, has been modified since  
 the public hearing on the Draft Environmental Assessment. There  
 will be no permanent impact to the Sunterra Building (Exposures  
 Gallery) or the Hillside Retail Village. There will be no impact to  
 Tlaquepaque walls.

39  
 1 not endanger anybody. I'm sure the current seller would be  
 2 ecstatic to have you purchase the property. Away from that,  
 3 we're concerned that the City of Sedona wants to go the  
 4 Ranger Road route and if they were to do that, they would  
 5 take a portion of our parking lot at Porter Lane and that  
 6 impingement would lose a substantial number of automobile  
 7 parking spaces which would create a problem because  
 8 according to the code we have to have so many spaces for so  
 9 much retail space.

10 If the State were to commandeer that property,  
 11 they not only have to pay us for that, but they would have  
 12 to build a garage to compensate for the car spaces that we  
 13 lost and I would like to express my sentiments along that  
 14 line. I would also like to reemphasize the fact that at  
 15 this time as we're speaking on the 18th of February that the  
 16 space, that the lot across the street is for sale and I  
 17 thank you.

18 L76 MS. HOLBORW: Katie Holborw, H-O-L-B-O-R-W.  
 19 Daryl, I was terribly disappointed with the meeting. It was  
 20 my impression that we would be able to have a question and  
 21 answer period or at least have some kind of public comment,  
 22 so for ADOT to come in and have this kind of meeting I feel  
 23 that they've effectively shut us down, our voices down. Two  
 24 court reporters for 300 people, comment sheets, is just not  
 25 enough.

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### **Response to Comment L75-2**

Ranger Road is not part of the State Highway System and is owned and maintained by the City of Sedona. Therefore, ADOT cannot include it in the project design concept.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

The proposed roadway section and alignment have been designed to minimize impacts to property, residences, and businesses. Approximately 10.6 acres of private land, a total of 12 parking spaces from eight businesses (west side of SR 179 near MP 313.3 at the "Y"), and four commercial building structures (including the canopy structure at the Chevron Service Station) will be affected by the proposed improvements. These are out of the approximately 36 single-standing businesses and four multiple business centers. Refer to Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations in the Final Environmental Assessment for additional information on the economic impacts.

Four businesses (Bell Rock Realty; Flags, Kites & Fun; the Inn on Oak Creek; and the Chevron service station at the corner of SR 89A and SR 179) will be affected. There will be minimal property acquisition in the Uptown Creek area. The proposed roadway improvements will relieve congestion and improve access to the Sedona area. Local residents and businesses in general will benefit from the more efficient and effective traffic operations along SR 179.

### **Response to Comment L76-1**

ADOT has held numerous public meetings. In many cases, the input from these meetings prompted an array of additional engineering and environmental studies aimed at addressing community issues and concerns. These studies and evaluations led to many changes and added features to better blend the improvements into the surrounding environment and natural scenery. Refer to Section VI. B. Public Involvement of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) for a discussion of the public involvement associated with the planning process.

40 This impacts on my community where I live and I'm  
 1 disappointed. I'm not so sure that this is not a foregone  
 2 conclusion about this road impacting on our community and so  
 3 I don't know if having a public hearing would actually work  
 4 or not, but I want them to know that I am terribly  
 5 disappointed in the way this meeting was conducted. I feel  
 6  
 L76-2 7 I need to ask George Wallace that he grant us another  
 8 meeting, a town hall meeting with questions and answers for  
 9 the general public so that we can all voice our concerns.

10 You can't replace the beauty of Sedona with a  
 11 wall and desecrate the land like they're going to do and  
 12 that's why people come here, they come here for the beauty,  
 13 not a five-lane highway to make it look like California.  
 14 L77 MR. ROTH: Geoffrey Roth, R-O-T-H. I live at 200  
 15 Schnebly Road, Sedona 86336. At this point I'm opposed to  
 16 the proposal as it stands. I've lived here quite awhile and  
 17 I've always felt that this area needed to grow in quality  
 18 and not quantity and this is what I see in this proposal.  
 19 It's a very nice project the way it's been designed and the  
 20 way it looks like it will be carried out, but it doesn't fit  
 21 the area.

22 This area is a very quaint, small town, one of  
 23 the most unique places in the country, if not in the world.  
 24 I don't believe we need a super highway coming from 179 so  
 25 people can get to the Y and 89A as expeditiously as

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#### **Response to Comment L76-1 (Continued)**

This type of format has been adopted because it allows more people to voice their opinions during one given meeting time. With an "open-microphone" format, the number of citizens who could have expressed their opinions would have been substantially reduced. The Open House format permits a richer, one-on-one exchange of views, along with an opportunity to leave written comments for the Project Record. In many cases, the input from these meetings prompted an array of additional engineering and environmental studies aimed at addressing community issues and concerns. These studies and evaluations led to many changes and added features to better blend the improvements into the surrounding environment and natural scenery. Refer to Section VI. B. Public Involvement of the FEA for a discussion of the public involvement associated with the planning process.

#### **Response to Comment L76-2**

The SR 179 Corridor Study, which was conducted in 1991-92, was the beginning point for public involvement for this project. In the course of that study, 10 alternative corridor improvements were evaluated, including one alternative which was suggested by interested citizens. There were three public meetings during the SR 179 Corridor Study. The prevailing opinion of the citizens and the government agencies involved was that the community would be best served by improvements to the existing highway corridor, in contrast to developing a "by-pass" alternative.

The SR 179 Design Concept Study, which began in 1994, followed the overall direction and process that was developed in the Corridor Study. Improvement alternatives were focused on the existing highway corridor. Public and agency involvement was maintained throughout the project. To ensure that public input was solicited and considered, ADOT held three public meetings, a public hearing, and an open house for SR 179. In addition, 11 agency workshops were held to obtain input from the agency stakeholders, which included representatives from the City of Sedona, the Village of Oak Creek, FHWA, Coconino National Forest, Coconino County, and Yavapai County. After the public hearing ADOT worked closely with the City of Sedona and the SR 179 Sedona Design Advisory Committee, which was appointed by the City Council. The purpose of this effort was to refine the concept to mitigate potential impacts. The project team met with

**Response to Comment L76-2 (Continued)**

the Committee four times in 1999. As a result of these meetings, the design speed was reduced from 50 mph to 40 mph in the southern 2 miles of Sedona, the road width was reduced from 76 feet to 68 feet and the alignment was refined to eliminate or reduce property impacts.

ADOT has received many written comments regarding Alternative C (the Selected Alternative), including letters, post cards, comment sheets, signed petitions, and recorded oral testimony at the hearing. The written comments generally fall into one of the following categories:

- Support for Alternative C (Selected Alternative)
- Support for Alternative C with minor realignments, revisions to proposed median openings, or other revisions related to individual properties
- Support for by-pass alternatives in lieu of Alternative C, such as Red Rock Crossing
- Support for Ranger Road alternative in lieu of improvements to SR 179 between Ranger Road and SR 89A
- Support for 3-lane section in lieu of Alternative C
- Support for the "No-build" alternative in the City of Sedona
- Support for the "No-build" alternative for all of SR 179

ADOT has considered all public comments and input in evaluating the viability of Alternative C. The purpose and need for the project can be best addressed with the least impact by implementing Alternative C. None of the other alternatives would fulfill the project objectives.

During final design, public meetings will be held in the city of Sedona and in the Village of Oak Creek.

41  
 1 possible. I would like to see this project scaled back as  
 2 we do need some improvements on 179. I would love to see it  
 3 scaled back to perhaps three lanes with a north and a south  
 L77-1 4 lane with a center turning lane along with perhaps some  
 5 occasional right hand slow traffic lanes and, of course, as  
 6 many pullouts as possible for scenic view.

7 The merchants here in this town are the backbone  
 8 of this community as it is a tourists community and I don't  
 L77-2 9 believe that they are being treated -- would be treated  
 10 fairly with this, especially at the Hillside and the -- not  
 11 only at Hillside, but also at the other premier businesses  
 12 in what we call the Gallery District which is Tlaquepaque,  
 13 Garlands, Hozho and the Hillside.  
 14 If we do need to do something, I say again, scale  
 15 it way back, don't make a super highway just so people can  
 16 get to the Y and then what as fast as they can. Thanks very  
 17 much.

L78 MR. CARSON: Gary Carson, 195 Skyline Drive,  
 19 Sedona 86336, phone number is 204-2345. Question is, from  
 20 the divided area to the area up town that now contains a  
 21 16-foot wide median, the left turn areas are only for 15  
 22 roads. Why do we have to have an 85-foot road divided when  
 L78-1 23 we can get by with a 66-foot wide road for those 15 left  
 24 turn areas.  
 25 (concluded at 8:00 p.m.)

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41  
 Passing and turning lanes alone will not resolve traffic issues that  
 have been identified within the corridor. The traffic volume growth  
 has been a key factor in the growth of traffic congestion on  
 SR 179. In the Design Year 2025, traffic volumes near the "Y" are  
 forecast to be 36,008 vehicles per day. Without a 4-lane or 5-lane  
 roadway, the 2025 peak-hour level of service is forecast to be  
 unacceptable on the entire length of SR 179 except at the  
 intersections of Avenida de Piedras and Jacks Canyon Road with  
 SR 179.

Scenic pull-outs would certainly aid tourists stopping along the  
 roadway to view the rocks. However, scenic pull-outs will not  
 alleviate congestion problems or reduce accidents caused by the  
 current, inadequate sight distance on the highway.

**Response to Comment L77-2**  
 Section IV. B. Social and Economic Considerations of the Final  
 Environmental Assessment describes the economic impact that  
 the proposed project will have on the community. While there are  
 virtually no improvements without some adverse impacts,  
 reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate and minimize the  
 adverse impacts. During construction, access will be maintained  
 to all business locations.

The Preferred Alternative alignment identified in the 1999 Draft  
 Environmental Assessment has been modified, based on input  
 from the public and the City of Sedona. The Selected Alternative's  
 alignment has been revised at the Hillside Shops and at the  
 Exposures Gallery (formerly Sunterra) to avoid parking impacts  
 and to minimize right-of-way impacts. The alignment has also  
 been moved to avoid parking impacts to Oak Creek Orchards.

**Response to Comment L78-1**  
 A 68-foot roadway would accommodate a 5-lane section but  
 without sidewalks or enough area for the embankments or slope to  
 match the existing grade.

42

7 C E R T I F I C A T E

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings had upon  
the foregoing hearing are contained in the shorthand record  
made by me thereof, and that the foregoing pages constitute  
a full, true, and correct transcript of said shorthand  
record, all done to the best of my skill and ability.

Dated at Phoenix, Arizona, this 11th day of

March, 1999.

  
DARYL L. SCHLOSSER  
Court Reporter

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